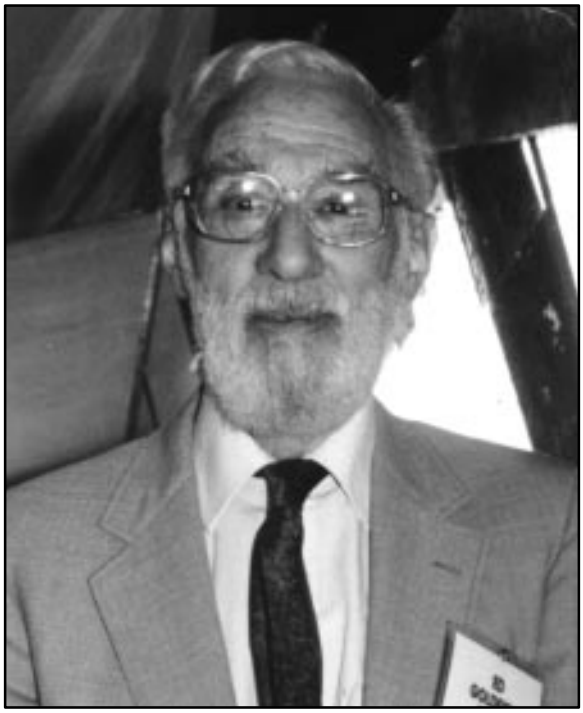

ORAL HISTORY–

EDWIN D. GOLDFIELD

This is an interview conducted on October 8, 1991, with Edwin D. Goldfield [who held a number of positions at the Census Bureau until 1975, such as Assistant Director for Program Development, Assistant Director for Statistical Information, and Chief, International Statistical Programs Center]. The interviewer is Frederick G. Bohme, Chief, History Staff at the Census Bureau.

Bohme: **Ed, could you tell me a little bit about your background before you came to the Census Bureau some years ago–something about your education, areas of study, and what you did before you came here? Throw in a date or two so we can see the framework.**

Goldfield: It does not take nearly as long to describe my background before I came to the Census Bureau compared with my time at the Census Bureau, which more than equals all the years of life I had before that. Just to set the scene, I was born in October 1918. As you can infer from that, I was a child during the years of the Great Depression. In those days, young people were much more concerned about what they might do for a living or, rather, how they might be able to make a living when they graduated from school than they seem to be now. I think that the young people of my generation were necessarily more oriented toward the choice of careers that might provide a job than was the case in later and more prosperous years. Despite that, I had the notion that I wanted to be a statistician, which most people would hardly regard as most qualifying. In fact, [the profession] was rare then. There were few if any universities that had departments of statistics or had the capability to provide major training in statistics. The relatively few statistics courses were usually associated with the departments of economics or the business school or perhaps agriculture or education. My reasoning at that time was something like this: I was a pretty good all-around student; the subject I liked best in junior high and high

school was mathematics. I was advised that if I wished to put my interest in mathematics into such a field as engineering, I probably would end up being a junior draftsman or something like that, because there was not too much call during the 1930's for graduate engineers. Other such professions–physics, astronomy, etc., were considered to be rather esoteric, so I thought that perhaps I could translate my interest in mathematics into statistics. I majored in mathematics through 4 years of high school, and majored in mathematics, statistics, and economics as a undergraduate at the City University of New York and as a graduate student at Columbia University. The eminent Dr. Harold Hotelling was the leading professor of statistics there (but he was called a professor of economics). I was able to take all the courses that he gave and courses given by other good professors of statistics, whatever they might have been called.

As an undergraduate at the City University of New York in my last couple of years there, I was one of Mayor LaGuardia's interns in municipal service. He had the notion that he would select each year some of the brightest young people in the universities located in the city of New York, not necessarily just the City University but any of the ones located there, and appoint them as interns to do special jobs at various departments. His thought was that they would perhaps be attracted into service in the city government after they graduated. My own experience, which I think I shared with some of my fellow interns, was that the more we learned about city government, the less we wanted to develop careers in it. However, while I was an intern in municipal service, I made a study of the city's criminal statistics system, involving the courts, correctional institutions, and so on, so you might say I started my career as a statistician in a "criminal way." In those days, the Federal Government was giving real professional examinations in the various professions, including statistics. To get on the register for junior statistician, which then paid $2,000 a year, you had to take a 4-hour examination that included an hour's worth of general knowledge and intelligence and 3 hours of detailed questions on statistics. The first time I took the examination, I got a grade of 96.40 and finished second in the country out of 5,000-plus applicants. That resulted in my getting (through 1939 and the early part of 1940) many offers of temporary clerical jobs from the Bureau of the Census, which was gearing up for the 1940 Census of Population and Husing. During that period, of course, I turned them all down because I was still in school and because they were only offers of temporary jobs, and they weren't even junior statistician jobs; they were clerical jobs. I didn't have my name taken off the list for turning them down, so every

time there was a certification from the civil service, my name was on it. I do not recall getting any offers for jobs from any other Federal Government agency at that time. This was still during the Depression, and Federal jobs were scarce. They were cutting back then, not adding. I also took the corresponding examinations for junior statistician for the City of New York and the State of New York, and I got similar low-level temporary job offers, which I turned down.

Bohme: **What year are we talking about here?**

Goldfield: 1939-1940; the Depression was still on, and it was really World War II that brought us out of the depression. With all due respect for President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his group, it was the war, more than anything else, that ended the depression.

I took the exam again the following year, when I was a graduate student at Columbia, and improved my grade to 97.00, again getting offers of jobs to come and work on the processing of the 1940 Censuses of Population and Housing which the Census Bureau was preparing for. Obtaining my master's degree by the end of the 1939-1940 school year at Columbia, my intention was to go on and complete my work for the Ph.D. My faculty advisor, however, advised me to take one of those jobs at the Census Bureau. He said the decennial census of the United States was the world's greatest statistical undertaking. It would be a wonderful opportunity for a budding young statistician to get in on the "ground floor" and have that experience, which was available only once every 10 years. I would learn more about statistics there than by staying at the university. That prediction turned out to be very true indeed.

Finally, some time in May 1940, I was continuing to get numerous job offers to be a clerk with a temporary indefinite appointment, with no job security whatsoever, at $1,440 per year. I called up the Census Bureau, and it surprised the Personnel Division very much that I was investing in a long distance call to talk to them. I said, "Look, Commencement Day at Columbia is something like June 8th. I could report for work on the morning of June 10th. If you'd like me to come, that would be a convenient time for me." They said, "Sure, come along," so I did. After commencement, I packed my bag and took the train to Washington, where I was greeted by some old friends and former classmates who had already taken jobs at the Census Bureau. I began work on Monday, June 10, 1940.

Bohme: **Could you give me some names; do you recall some of these?**

Goldfield: Myron Greenwald, Joe Steinberg, Hal Nisselson, Dave Kaplan, Norman Lawrence, Leon Geoffrey, Ben Gura, Jack Ogus, and others. It was almost like old home week.

Bohme: **Is this what we in later years called the "Class of 1940" around here?**

Goldfield: I will talk about it in just a moment. I found, when I arrived at the Census Bureau (which was then in the new building at 2nd and "D" Street, Southwest) that it was like conscription for the Army in time of war. They were bringing in hordes of people every day, especially on Mondays. Those of us who were reporting for work that day were told to form ourselves into a line in alphabetical order. I found myself in line just ahead of a young professor from Columbia University, Ken Hechler, who decided to take one of those jobs because during the off-season from Columbia he wanted to do some research at the Library of Congress. Being a low-paid professor, he thought that it would help to pay his living expenses if he took one of the only jobs he knew of that was available in Washington. This was a temporary clerical job at the Census Bureau, and the location was not too far from the Library of Congress. So he worked with me and others during that summer. He would later become Congressman Hechler. Well, we had people like that working at the Census Bureau then.

When we got in line and were processed, I was a little disappointed that I was told to report to the Population Division. I thought that if they looked at my college record and saw that I had taken a 1-year course in agricultural economics, and at the time I had not yet taken any courses in formal demography, they might have assigned me to Agriculture. Then again, it was like the Army; they would assign you regardless of what your special skill might be. In those days, the census of agriculture was taken at the same time as the censuses of population and housing. Agriculture was still considered to be a way of life for rural people, and the Census Bureau regarded the census of agriculture as a demographic census. It was primarily a census of people and the kinds of things they did. Now the Census Bureau regards the census of agriculture as an economic census and is taken in conjunction with the other economic censuses. Agriculture no longer is so much a way of life for a rural population, but more like an agribusiness. As it turned out later, I was happy that I did get assigned to the Population Division.

As I said before, this was before the country came out of the Depression. Even though it was offering only temporary jobs that required moving to Washington, that it paid relatively low wages, and had little prospect for most of the people to develop into anything permanent, the Census Bureau had been given by the then-existing Civil Service Commission a hunting license to offer jobs to any people who were on any civil service registers. It could offer jobs below the salary skill

level and below the classification level so that it could offer clerical jobs to persons on the junior statistician register. I seem to remember that Dick [E. Richard] Bourdon, who was one of the members of the class of 1940, came in under a fish culturist register. As I recall, he was of French-Canadian stock, which accounts for the spelling of his name.

People were happy to take the jobs. For some of them, it was an opportunity to come to Washington; mainly, however, it was an opportunity to get enough money to eat. This was before the days of computers, and the Census Bureau was hiring thousands and thousands of people to process the 1940 censuses. Ten thousand or so people, all the new faces in Washington, then were new Census employees. You could have gone out on the floor of the Bureau and recruited a symphony orchestra, or you could have recruited a construction crew to build a house, almost anything. We had all kinds of talents and all kinds of backgrounds here, including a few of us who thought of ourselves as statisticians. Those of us who did have the credentials were given appointment papers that called for the same jobs as others were getting but had a note attached saying that because we were qualified to be junior statisticians, we would be considered for professional jobs that opened up later in the processing of the census–meaning as they got into analysis and other such things.

This was the beginning of what people later referred to as the “Golden Age” of the Census Bureau. It was the famous “Class of 1940” which was considered to be the people who came into the Bureau in 1940 or in the year or two before that, including people like A. Ross Eckler, who came in 1939, and so on. The Census Bureau then became the place of our first professional job, or in the case of more senior people like Ross Eckler and Howard Grieves, into more senior levels. I was told that the Population Division (which by 1940 included many activities that now have been spun off into separate divisions) had only two professional people that had worked in the 1930 census–Leon Truesdell, the distinguished demographer who was the Chief of the Population Division, and Alba Edwards, who was the expert on occupation and industry.

Now, all of a sudden, the Population Division found itself with thousands of clerks, some who had some credentials as statisticians or would-be statisticians. Then, as the various stages of doing the 1940 Censuses of Population and Housing proceeded and also that the Bureau took on the Current Population Survey in 1942, it had a need for professional statisticians. It had the money for the decen-

nial census and it had the will to hire staff. You might say the Census Bureau at that time moved from being a largely data-collecting and data-processing organization to an organization that was capable of doing real professional statistical work, including sample design (which was a new thing then) and statistical analysis.

Part of that accomplishment was to the credit of the people then in charge of the Census Bureau and the Commerce Department. Part of it was because the economic conditions made those people available to the Bureau, and the agency took advantage of the situation. Some of those people, like me, spent a major part of their career at the Census Bureau. My temporary appointment eventually lasted 35 years. I took some short-term assignments elsewhere during that period, but always with a string firmly attached to the Bureau to bring me back. Others worked there for a period of time but then took a job elsewhere. Some of them became among the first statisticians at what is now the National Institutes of Health, and some moved in to what is now the Bureau of Economic Analysis. You might say that the overflow from the Census Bureau helped supply statisticians (who by that time had a little bit of experience) for other Federal Government agencies too. I regard that period of time, starting at approximately in 1940, pretty much the beginning of real professional statistical work in the Census Bureau and elsewhere in the Federal Government.

I can recall many years later when George Hay Brown was Director [1969-1973] of Census Bureau, that he said to me: “I hear people talking about the golden age of the Census Bureau and the class of 1940. It is a little disconcerting to me; it makes it appear that I am coming in at a time of decline.” I explained to him: “No, it’s just that that was the beginning of things, and the Census Bureau has built on that and has established itself quite firmly as an agency populated by educated and experienced statisticians, economists, demographers, and others as well.” So I think there were a number of factors that came together then that worked out well for (1) some of us individuals, (2) the Census Bureau, (3) for other Government agencies, and (4) the profession of statistics.

I mentioned that there was a note attached to my appointment that said I would be considered for professional jobs; this happened even more promptly than I might have thought. I first was assigned to be the co-chief of one of the various successive processing operations of the census, supervising squads of clerks. I was the co-chief with Joe Waksberg; the chief of the adjacent operation was Morty Boi-

sen. As you know, we all stayed with the Census Bureau after that. By November, I had already been moved to a junior professional position in the Employment and Income Statistics Branch (as is was then called) of the Population Division. The chief of that branch was a relatively young fellow whom I thought was quite senior because he was considerably older than I. He was A. Ross Eckler; he also advanced a good deal in the Census Bureau and eventually became Deputy Director [1949-1965] and Director [1965-1969]. In later years, when he would introduce me to some audience, he would say, “Ed Goldfield has advanced more in the Census Bureau than I have,” by which he meant not that I had advanced to a higher level than he did, but he had started at a higher level than I, so my increase from the bottom up was somewhat greater.

My experience at the Census Bureau in those earlier years was that I was in effect doing postgraduate work in statistics. I was learning a lot more about how really to be a statistician than I could have learned had I simply stayed in academia. If I had stayed in academia and perhaps become a professor, I probably never would have learned much about how to design or run a survey or how to plan or conduct a census. Things of that sort I learned at the Census Bureau. Some of the real pioneering work in statistics, including theoretical statistics, was being done at the Bureau because it was germane to the work the agency was doing or was planning to do. I’m thinking of people like Morris Hansen and Bill Hurwitz, and later Joe Daly, to say nothing of such applied statisticians as Ross Eckler, Howard Grieves, and Conrad Taeuber. Conrad was not quite a member of the class of 1940; he came in later from the position of Chief Statistician of the United Nations’ Food and Agriculture Organization. We were fortunate to get him. The Food and Agriculture Organization was lodged in Washington during the war and then, some years after the war, it moved to Rome. Conrad chose not to move with them. Thus, he was “at large,” and the Census Bureau offered him a job. Later, he was one of the people who had the dubious distinction of being a boss of mine. Among the bosses I had as more or less immediate superiors were Ross Eckler, Conrad Taeuber, and Morris Hansen. I was fortunate in that respect, too.

Bohme: **What problems did you see looming at that time, or were you at too low a level to see them? Were you concerned or were you involved, if there were problems, in solving them? For example, the Current Population Survey or the preparation for the 1950 Censuses of Population and Housing. Did you get involved in the economic area at all during that time?**

Goldfield: There were problems, there certainly are problems, there always will be problems. [The Bureau] tries to recognize the problems and do something about them. Some of them were of a technical nature, and that's where people like Morris Hansen and Ed [W. Edwards] Deming, among others, made contributions. An example of technical problems was what to do about nonresponse in the censuses and surveys. One kind of nonresponse is where the Bureau does not get any answer at all from the household or the person and you have a blank questionnaire. The second type of nonresponse is where somebody says, "I'll be damned if I'll answer this question on income; that is a private matter and you have no business asking me that." That was one of the real problems in the 1940 Censuses of Population and Housing, since it was the first time the censuses included a question on income [on a sample basis]. That question was put at the end of the interview because if the enumerator got kicked out of a household when that question was asked, the interviewer would have already obtained the answers to the previous questions. It caused a great uproar in the country, however, particularly in the Scripps-Howard newspapers, which were the biggest chain. This was in the days before television, so newspapers were the most influential shapers of public opinion. They reported that people were saying, "We pay our taxes and we fill out tax returns. Why should anybody else ask us for our income? It is going to be turned over to who knows whom, and so on." What is now called the the Current Population Survey started in 1940 as a monthly report on unemployment. It was asked to find out how many people were unemployed and what were their characteristics. As we got into World War II, the focus on that shifted from unemployment to labor supply. Then it became the Monthly Report on the Labor Force, which was the name it was given when it was transferred to the Census Bureau on the demise of the Work Projects Administration; then it became the Current Population Survey. I had a hand in renaming the survey. Census had many technical problems of sample design, and how to weight the sample results. Under the leadership of Morris Hansen and many mathematical statisticians who worked on it, the Current Population Survey developed into a worldwide model of a household sample survey.

Bohme: **I want to interject a specific question here. You were speaking of the period where the Bureau was involved in this great question of internment of the Japanese in California. Were you associated with Calvert Dedrick? Were you here at the time this particular situation arose? Do you have any particular recall of the event where we supplied the War Department with punch cards with data on them? To my understanding, these were relatively the same as were later published, so the cards did not have names on them.**

Goldfield: That situation arose early in the World War II period; I guess it was 1942. The War Department may have started this notion of relocating the Japanese in 1941, but I guess the Census Bureau may have gotten involved in 1942. I'm happy to say I had nothing to do with that; I was much too junior at the time. As you know, Calvert Dedrick, who was one of the most senior member of the Bureau's staff at that time, was the person who had most to do with it within the Bureau.

You have the story right. From what Calvert said to me, the relocation of Japanese is to this day misunderstood and an embarrassment to the Census Bureau. There have been oral and printed allegations that the Bureau turned over a list of names and addresses of all the Japanese living in the United States to the War Department. It identified these individuals from our list and then picked them up. That was not the case!

Later on, when I had some major responsibilities for Census Bureau policy, including policy on access to individual records, I had the occasion to turn down people from the Secret Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and elsewhere who came to the Bureau thinking that I could provide them with names and addresses of businesses or individuals. I always had difficulties persuading them that even though they represented an important Government concern, the Census Bureau would not cooperate with them, at least not to that degree. That's the way, as I understood it from Calvert and from others, that the Census Bureau reacted. It said, "We have a law, now title 13, that required us to take the 1940 Censuses of Population and Housing under a pledge of confidentiality. No one but sworn agents and census employees doing the work can see the individual identifiable returns." As I understand it, what was finally worked out in the Japanese relocation and similar cases was that the Census Bureau provided what amounted to statistical information, but it did not identify individual Japanese. I do not think it even gave specific addresses, even without names, but rather small-area tabulations.

Now, if you go back to the earlier history of the Census Bureau, World War I for example, you can find instances where census records were used, but that was before the law had become specific and tight, as it later became. I'm proud to have played a part in protecting the integrity of the census records and to see that the Census Bureau still does that.

Bohme: **I would like to take you to the 1950's and pursue the same area of inquiry. Were you at all involved in the negotiation with the National Archives concerning the 72 year confidentiality rule?**

Goldfield: I was. As long as we are on the subject of confidentiality, let's pursue that issue. Walter Kehres was sort of the "point man" on that for the Census Bureau. We sort of tried it on, somewhat like Neville Chamberlain with his umbrella, coming back and saying, "I've achieved peace in our time"; but he was under the gun.

Bohme: **What was Walter Kehres's position at the time?**

Goldfield: He was Chief of the Administrative Services Division, and later Assistant Director for Administration; so, in effect, Walter was in charge of census records. In the first place, the Census Bureau had been placing old census records in the National Archives' possession. Although possession may not really be "nine points of the law," at least it put the National Archives in the position to say, "We have these records, and we're proposing to make them public." More importantly, the National Archives was armed with legislation; I guess it was the National Archives and Records Act that empowered it to negotiate with agencies to make records available to the public, if not immediately, then after an interval of years. If the agency's law was based on the premise that nothing needs to be confidential in perpetuity, eventually there must come a point when records can be made available to the public (or to some segment of the public) provided the records still exist. This is getting a little fuzzy in memory. As I recall, however, that law said that if the originating agency and the National Archives could not agree on a date for opening records which the National Archives thought were of value to the public, the National Archives could determine when they could be opened. That agency was proposing that the census records be opened after 50 years. Walter Kehres came back with an agreement that the census records could be made available to the public after 72 years, so he did some very effective bargaining, being "under the gun," so to speak. It doesn't appear as though that has done great harm to public relations and to the Census Bureau.

Bohme: **Do you happen to remember whether this 72 years was pulled out of the air? Was it a compromise? What was the thinking behind it?**

Goldfield: After the deal was made [1952], a number of people attached explanations to it which were the products of their imagination or what sounded logical. One explanation with a great deal of currency was that this was the average length of life; so, in effect, from a statistician's standpoint of thinking of averages, it was a lifetime guarantee of confidentiality. There is a legal principle that says the dead have no privacy; so, this seems to be consistent with that. That was not true; there were other explanations too. The actual fact, as I believe I understood it from Walter Kehres and others, was that the censuses prior to 1900 (which had been taken without a guarantee of confidentiality) had been made available to the public at successive intervals. The most recently opened census records happened after 72 years. It was agreed, as I heard the story later, that the same 72-year interval was to be applied to later censuses. Therefore, the 1900 census would be opened in 1972. I believe that was the reason for the selection of 72 years, but 72 years also seemed like a reasonable lifetime then.

By the way, the Census Bureau was made to understand by the people at the National Archives (during the time the negotiations were going on) that the [population] census would not be put out "on the street"; only persons who were qualified and had an appropriate reason for looking at the schedules would be given access to them. My impression in the years following the agreement was that that [restriction] was being executed very loosely by the National Archives. You could go there and say, "I am a genealogist," and my understanding is they would say, "Walk right in." As far as I know, in effect, the censuses through 1910 (and soon to include the 1920 census) are pretty much open to anybody who wants to go to the trouble of going to where the census records are available. The problem is that once you are there, you're looking at the reels of microfilm or whatever. You may be writing a history of the Bohme family, but you could look at the census records of other families as well. I do not like that too much; it is certainly more wide open than the way we operate the age search service at the Census Bureau, where you are free to get a record for yourself or for somebody that you are the heir to, but you are not free to get a record for your neighbors even though you are willing to pay the fee. So I am a little concerned about it; but, as I say, although it has meant that the Census Bureau then had to stop unqualified guarantees of confi-

dentiality to its respondents, I haven't seen any indication of fear on the part of any large numbers of people.

In fact, 72 years is not adequate protection. I am quite certain the main problem that the Census Bureau has in convincing respondents that it is safe to answer the census questions is not that a respondent will be worried about some revelations being publicly disclosed 72 years after the fact, but that many persons don't believe the guarantee at all; they don't have that much trust in the Government.

After I left the Census Bureau, my first activity at the National Academy of Sciences [1975-1976] was the Committee on National Statistics' study entitled "Privacy and Confidentiality as Factors in Survey Response Including "Census." As part of that study, we ran two national surveys. In one of them, a survey of opinions and attitudes, we included a succession of questions to probe into how strongly people believed in the guarantee of confidentiality promised by the Census Bureau. By the time we got to the end of that battery of questions, which in effect was, "Well, despite the fact that you said in response to earlier questions that you understand there is a guarantee of confidentiality and you give it some credence, do you really believe that if another Government agency really wanted to get the census records, it could get them? By that time, we were down to a core of 5 percent, and everybody else had "fallen off" by that time. The battery of questions had nothing to do with whether confidentiality was guaranteed for 72 years or not.

Part of the survey was run by the Census Bureau and part by the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan to determine whether it made any difference as to who was the interviewer. Of course, we did find that, although the Service Research Center is one of the very best of the nongovernment survey organizations, typically it got lower response rates than did the Census Bureau. The conclusion drawn from that and from the answers to some of the attitude questions is that there is some association of response with the type of organization that is conducting the survey; some of that has to do with trust in confidentiality. Overlying all of it on the part of the public, as to Government promises of confidentiality, the Census Bureau was seen as being less subject to that than some other agencies. But certainly that is something the Bureau worries about and tries to overcome.

The other survey that we ran as part of the study was called the Response Behavior Survey. The questionnaire content was similar to that of the Current Popula-

tion Survey, and it was conducted by Census Bureau interviewers. The sample of about 2,500 households (consisting of about 4,500 individual respondents) was split into five interpenetrating subsamples. In each, the questionnaire content was the same, but the introductory statement on confidentiality was different. The five different conditions were (1) a statement that replies may be given to other agencies and the public, (2) no mention of confidentiality, (3) assurance of confidentiality for 25 years, (4) assurance of confidentiality for 75 years, and (5) assurance of confidentiality in perpetuity. The survey results showed a significant, but fairly modest, correlation between degree of assurance of confidentiality and response rate. All the response rates would be considered good in comparison with those typically obtained by nongovernment organizations. To the Census Bureau, however, which strives for a 100-percent response rate, especially in the 10-year censuses of population and housing, differences in response rates of even a couple of percentage points are a matter of concern.

Bohme: **May we go back to your earlier career in the Bureau now and perhaps come back to this subject later on when we talk about your work with the National Academy? You have obviously continued to be involved with the Census Bureau and its various activities and this [confidentiality issue] was a distinct element in the preparation for subsequent censuses. May we go back to the 1940's and work forward to the 1950 Census of Population? I assume you were in the Population Division then or did you move?**

Goldfield: I was still in the Population Division. I was an assistant to Howard Brunsman, who was the division chief in the latter part of the 1940's. Somewhat to my surprise, I was appointed as program coordinator for the 1950 census, so in some respects you might say I had more of a hand in that census than any other one. This was, in effect, the rehearsal for the kind of job that Dave Kaplan had later and Charlie Jones has now. Mind you, I was about 30 years old at the time. I survived it, the census survived it, and without any boasting, the census, you know, is the product of the work of many people.

I would say that the 1950 census was probably the least controversial and quietest census of any of the ones that I remember from 1940 through 1990. There was no public outcry about it; there were no particular problems affecting the Nation then that impacted upon the census. At that time, the bureau was using tried and true techniques. It was just on the threshold of using computers, so the agency was still largely dependent on what we called machine tabulation methods, which the

Census Bureau by that time had lots of experience with, starting from the 1890's. I do not recall any particularly great budgetary, public relations, or technical problems. So there aren't a lot of things that stick in my mind about the 1950 census because it doesn't have any particular painful memories, but it was the very beginning of the use of computers. We had contracted for the building of UNIVAC I [Universal Automatic Computer I] before the 1950 census. I believe we took possession of UNIVAC I, serial 1 (the very first large-scale data processing computer) in late 1949, and spent the better part of 2 years testing it. It was used, as I recall, for a little bit of the later tabulation work of the 1950 census.

Bohme: **May I take you back to that period and ask you about Leon Truesdell? I assume you had some association with him. I remember in some of the other things that I've read or heard that he was not all that enthralled with the idea of having an electronic computer (as distinguished from the old punchcard tabulation) even though the new computer was going to use punchcards for a while. Could you give me some of your memories of working with Leon Truesdell?**

Goldfield: Of course, his name is firmly imbedded in my mind as Leon E. Truesdell. Everybody called him Dr. Truesdell; I wouldn't be surprised if even his wife called him Dr. Truesdell. He was a very dignified gentleman of the old school in every way. When I first arrived in the Population Division in 1940, he was very remote from those of us working "out on the floor." We caught occasional glimpses of him, although he spent nearly all of his time in his office. He was a tall, dignified, white-haired gentleman, whom we recognized as not of our generation at all. He was one of the two professionally qualified people in the Population Division who carried over from previous censuses; he started working for the Census Bureau in 1910. He was associated with agriculture and with population, but most of his career was in population. He not only was dubious about computers, but he was dubious about sampling too. It was not his idea to incorporate sampling (which was on a relatively small scale) into the 1940 Censuses of Population and Housing. He believed in things that were time tested and didn't believe too much in doing anything risky with anything as important and as tradition-ridden as the decennial census. I don't think he ever cottoned to things like the Current Population Survey, and things of that sort.

It was good that the Census Bureau had people of different opinions. There was a great deal of arguing in the Bureau during the "Golden Age," like somebody yelling at someone else: "You don't know what you are talking about"; these were all

arguments, however, among people who were threshing out technical problems, and the Bureau accomplished a lot that way. Morris Hansen, in particular, was a great believer in a team approach to things. There were all kinds of stories, some of which I could relate, about how Morris Hansen and Bill Hurwitz would get together on something which might then lead to a paper in the *Journal of the American Statistical Association* or something like that; they, however, would achieve it by what seemed like argument.

Bohme: **Were you involved in any of these teams as a team member?**

Goldfield: Yes. As I said, at one part of my career, Morris Hansen was my chief, and I attended his staff meetings and worked with him. He was the very opposite of Leon Truesdell. Dr. Truesdell had a very long career at the Census Bureau, remarkably enough working under my supervision reluctantly when he reached 70–the mandatory age of retirement. He never said this to me. He gave up the position of Chief of the Population Division and continued as a senior demographer or some such title, as I recall. I believe that he stayed in that position or its equivalent for another 18 to 20 years. During a good part of that time, I was responsible for his activities, which wasn't easy, but he did produce the book on history of machine tabulation methods in the Census Bureau during that period. He wanted to then produce a book on the contributions of Dr. John Shaw Billings, whom he regarded as perhaps deserving of the title of America's first demographer; by that time, however, Dr. Truesdell was in his late 80's or early 90's and never got around to it. He did, however, on his own, produce a history of Truesdell.

We had some problems with him: I remember one time learning that he had just bought a new Oldsmobile; this was when he was in his late 80's. I said to him, "Dr. Truesdell, how's your new car working?" He said, "It's pretty good, but it vibrates too much at speeds over 65 miles an hour." I said, "Dr. Truesdell, where are you driving at speeds over 65 miles an hour?" He said, "I come to work by way of the Beltway but don't tell my daughter; she would be terribly upset if she knew that." Well, sometime after that he had a little accident turning into the Census Bureau parking lot. Making a left turn off Silver Hill Road, he had failed to see an oncoming car. His car got damaged and he got damaged a little bit, but he refused any medical attention. Then I suggested to Dr. Truesdell, "There's an office at the Department of Commerce for the use of the Director of the Census. You could use that office and it would be more convenient for you. You live in the District of Columbia and it would be easier for you to get to it. Whatever you

need at the Census Bureau library could be supplied to you, and it's a nice office. He seemed to be going along with that and then with what was my ulterior purpose. I said: "Well, if you worked at the Commerce Department and you had your office there, you wouldn't have to drive to work. You could take public transportation." At that point he indignantly rejected the whole idea.

In his later years–by "later years" I mean as he got into his 90's–I, Dave Kaplan, and several others who had worked with him and were still his admirers had lunch with him each year on the occasion of his birthday, which I recall was in March. We had a kind of special affair on the occasion of his 95th birthday. At the conclusion of it, I said, "Dr. Truesdell, we will be looking forward to having another luncheon a year from now," and Dr. Truesdell said, "I don't know if I'll be here next year." Well, as we were walking away from the table, Dave Kaplan said to me, "That was the first time I ever heard Dr. Truesdell say anything about mortality." I said, "You misunderstood him. He was not saying anything about mortality; what he was referring to was that he had some notion of moving back to New England." Well, that was Dr. Truesdell.

When it came to sampling and computers and other "new fangled" ideas, this was only a part of his basic integrity. He wasn't the only one who did that. I remember one time when I was trying to sell Ray Hurley on the use of some advanced equipment for the Census of Agriculture when he was Chief of the Agriculture Division [June 1946-January 1968]. What Ray Hurley said to me was, "You go talk to some of the other divisions, like the Population Division, and let them try it out. If they use it and it is a complete success, then I will consider using it.

As I said, it is good to have people of varying viewpoints and varying sets of principles in an organization like the Bureau of the Census. This organization is not monolithic, and all the time I was here I appreciated very much–as did the others of my cohort–that the Census Bureau was, and I trust still is, a place of ideas–sometimes clashing ideas–and dedicated to progress.

The education that I was speaking of that I began getting when I arrived at the Census Bureau in 1940, that I regarded as postgraduate education, continued all the time I was there. I was fortunate enough to have quite a number of different jobs in the Bureau, a whole lot of different responsibilities, and to work for a time in other settings, e.g., I worked for a time on leave from the Census Bureau for the Social Science Research Council. I spent two hitches on Capital Hill as a House of Representatives' subcommittee staff director, and I worked for the

Agency for International Development and its predecessor organizations at the State Department.

Bohme: **These were all before you finally left the Bureau?**

Goldfield: Yes; I never detached myself completely from the Bureau. In fact, some of these were at the instigation of the Bureau, but it lent variety. It was a broadening experience, of course, and it was simply an illustration of the interrelations that the Census Bureau has with so many other agencies and activities that other places would want somebody with a Bureau background to work with them.

Bohme: **Could you put some dates to these, at least years?**

Goldfield: Some, yes. In 1959, the House of Representatives first established the Subcommittee on Census and Government Statistics (as it was first called). Since then, the subcommittee has gone through several minor name changes, and it is now called the Subcommittee on Census and Population because Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder, Democrat from the State of Colorado, had an interest in population. When she was chairperson, she changed the name of the subcommittee which in 1959 was under the House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service. That Committee's membership or staff had no expertise in this area. They wanted somebody, as they say on Broadway, to "create the role" of staff director and get the subcommittee organized and started–somebody knowledgeable in the field. In those days, when Members of Congress thought of statistics, they tended to think of the Census Bureau. They weren't too well informed about the manifold activities that were of a statistical nature then going on in other agencies. Therefore, they asked the Census Bureau to lend them somebody who had knowledge on the typical "nonreimbursable detail" to be the first staff director. They wanted a relatively senior person who was considered capable of getting along with members and the congressional staff, and I was chosen to be that person. So, for 2 years of the 86th Congress [1959 and 1960] I was on detail from the Census Bureau as staff director of the House Subcommittee on Census and Government Statistics. I developed a program; I tried to educate the Members of Congress who became the members of that subcommittee. I planned and conducted hearings, worked on legislation, and wrote speeches for Congressmen. If you were a committee or subcommittee staff person, the Congressmen who were associated with it–particularly the chairperson–thought of you as working for him. They did not have any hesitancy about asking me to write a campaign speech for them. Anyway, it was a very interesting experience, and it was helpful to the Census Bureau. The chairperson of the full Committee, the influential

Representative Tom Murray of Tennessee, called me in shortly after I arrived there, and he said, “You may be worried about the conflict of interest. Don’t worry about it; I’m sure everything you do will be for the good of the committee and for the good of the Census Bureau, and I don’t think there will be any conflict.” This was very reassuring to me.

I had an associate, Dough Fahey, who came in a little after I did to be assistant; he was very helpful. The two of us worked together until the Commerce Department made the Census Bureau stop the practice of detailing staff to Congress. It was a very useful thing for the Bureau; it gave it its own “in” to the Congress, which is what the Commerce Department later decided it did not like. We were in effect bypassing their Congressional Liaison Office. Also, there was a Republican administration which also thought it was incompatible. Therefore, the Census Bureau no longer has that privilege. You might say there was a conflict of interest; some believed we had “undue influence” as compared to now. While that committee still exists, it appoints and pays its own staff directors, and they are not beholden in any way to the Census Bureau.

There is no particular reason why they should favor the Bureau versus any other agency or any other activity, but the fact is that I don’t see any difference, really, in the way things work now and the way they worked then. In fact, when I was on Capital Hill, I sometimes got recriminations from Ross Eckler and others–Why am I writing this kind of legislation or why am I conducting this kind of hearing and so on? I had to remind him that I was working for the Congress even though you were still paying my salary.

Some years later when there was revived talk about a mid-decade census, the House subcommittee got to thinking that it would want to hold some hearings, investigate the idea, and, perhaps, draw up some legislation and introduce it. They wanted somebody to manage all that activity who had the right background and congressional experience; so, I was called back in 1967. I spent the year or a better part of the year there and succeeded in getting the House of Representatives to pass legislation authorizing a mid-decade census, which was later enacted into law. I wrote the legislation; I conducted all the hearings on it. I floor-managed the bill, which you are not really supposed to do. I sat in the seat of the House majority whip on the floor of the House of Representatives while the bill was up for debate and vote. I assigned, “Representative, you can have 5 minutes,” and “Representative, you can have 10 minutes,” and so on, and it was passed by a better than

2-to-1 majority with a majority from both the Republicans and Democrats. Eventually we got the legislation for the mid-decade census on the books, but we've never gotten any appropriation to conduct it.

In this context, sitting here in the Bureau of the Census, I'm saying "we." Of course, when I first left the Bureau and started working for the National Academy of Sciences, I was saying "we." Referring to the Census Bureau was force of habit, but I eventually got over that. Now that I am back here for this interview, I can say "we" again, especially since we're talking about a period when I really was at the Census Bureau. I doubt that there ever will be a mid-decade census of population in the sense of a complete census, but the legislation is on the books, and theoretically the Census Bureau and the Commerce Department have to go through the motions at the appropriate time of each decade to request appropriations for it. Once that is denied by the Office of Management and Budget or the Congress, then the Census Bureau cannot be accused of failing to live up to its legal requirements to take a mid-decade census. I still have some hope that that legislation, now part of Title 13, United States Code, will provide some basis for some kind of large statistical effort in the middle of the decade–not necessarily a complete census. It might be called a census for legal and strategic purposes but would not be a census in the sense of a 100-percent enumeration. It might be like a much larger Current Population Survey or something equivalent to that. However, we are also now thinking of other alternatives, such as what some people call a rolling census, spread out over the entire decade. Again, the Census Bureau is still trying to think of new and better ways to do things. Maybe Dr. Truesdell is thrashing about in his grave, but I am sure there were things that he did in his later years that he would have thought many years earlier were rather radical.

Now I think I interrupted you when you were going to go on to something else?

Bohme: **I simply wanted to tie up the 1950's to see what you had been doing later in that decade before you got to the subcommittee.**

Goldfield: I am reminded of something connected with the 1950 census, if I may digress; you won't mind having some anecdotes. The dress rehearsal for the 1950 census was in Georgia and South Carolina. I spent 2 or 3 of the dreariest weeks in my life living in the John C. Calhoun Motel in Anderson, South Carolina, during part of that dress rehearsal, but part of it I spent in Atlanta. Atlanta was the big-city part of it.

When I was in South Carolina, one of the crew leaders reported to me that one of the enumerators under that crew leader had enumerated a woman who was over

100 years old. Well, we had had a continuing interest in the validity of reports that people were centenarians. (I will go back and tell you something about what we did in the 1940 census by way of expressing incredulity about some of the centenarians.) I was interested in that, and I said: “I’m going to go out and check that.” So, I hied myself out along the country dirt road and eventually came to a rambling wood frame house with a veranda in front. This was in an area occupied by Blacks, and there were two boys about the same age, 12 or so, playing in the front yard. It turned out that one was the uncle of the other; this was a multigenerational household. I said to one of them: “You have somebody here who was reported as being over 100 years old; is that right?” They said, “yes”; I think she was a great-grandmother of one of them and the grandmother of the other; with some trepidation I said: “Can I see her?” I thought I would be told, “Well, she is lying in bed upstairs,” or something like that.

One of the boys said, “Well, I’ll have to check and see. She is busy in the kitchen cooking dinner for the family.” So he went in, and she came out wiping her hands on her apron, a sturdy gray-haired lady. I asked, “Are you over 100 years old?” She said: “I am famous for that. Everyone around here knows that. I have lived here all my life and everybody knows I am over 100 years old.” It was her great claim to fame.

I said: (now this was 1949) “Well then, you were born a slave and you remember when Lincoln freed the slaves?” She said: “Yes, I do.” I said: “How old were you when Lincoln freed the slaves?” She said: “Oh, I was just a little bitty child”–gesturing like this to indicate maybe 1 or 2 years old. Well, if her statement in response to the question was correct, and I believe it was, she was not over 100 years old; she was in her 80’s, and I didn’t question her any further on that. I said, “Thank you very much,” but it was an illustration of the lack of accuracy of people who are reported to be over 100 years old.

I think reporting is getting more accurate, and the great increase in the number of centenarians is a fact, although I am sure that some of the ones in the census who have claimed to be over 100 years old are not really so, but back around 1940 or 1950 we had the general impression the majority were not. You go through different cycles of honesty, however, in reporting age. When you are a child, you want to be older; when 17, you want to be 18; and when you’re 20, you want to be 21. But then when you get into your 30’s and 40’s, you like to be younger or at least you like to be thought of as being younger. Once you get to be quite old, though,

you might start taking pride in your age. It's complimentary to you to have people say: "Oh, you don't look your age!" and pretty soon you might find yourself agreeing that you are over 100 years old when you are really only 90.

Well, being associated with the census and surveys, exposes you to a lot of knowledge about human beings, our society, and our economy. It is always a learning experience.

I do not have much more to say in retrospect about the 1950 census, except to jump the gun a little bit and say that in those days we were still pretty much devoted to the motto that "If it's in the census, it's a fact." I am quoting from a former director of the Census Bureau. We did not at that time do introspective studies that led to being able to develop a good estimate of the undercount in the census. We did so retroactively; we now can tell you the best guesses for the overall net undercount in the 1940 through 1990 censuses. Over the period through 1980, each census was estimated to have a net undercount less than that of the preceding census, so we seemed to be getting better as it went on. The 1950 census fitted into that pattern; it seemed to be, in retrospect, a little better than 1940. That was not too surprising, considering the difference in conditions at the time, but it was not as good as 1960, 1970, and 1980.

Now, in that string of increasing "completeness" of the census, we have an "uptick" again. We are currently estimating that the 1990 census may have had (according to a preliminary calculation) a net overall undercount slightly greater than what we estimated for the 1980 census. So you might say the 1950 census was an unremarkable census, which was the way I wanted it to be when I was program coordinator. It was a transitional census, between all the censuses which were done without computers, without much sampling, a line questionnaire [schedule] rather than what was used in later censuses where there is a separate questionnaire for each household, computers, FOSDIC [film optical sensing device for input to computers], and more sampling.

So with all this evolution, the 10-year census does not proceed by revolution, much as you would like to think if you were going to do revolutionary things. It proceeds by evolution. Important changes in the 10-year census develop over a period of several decades, and that is the way it should be. If you don't want to risk the whole census on some new relatively untested procedure and you just had some small-scale pretest, you want to introduce change gradually before you risk the entire census.

Bohme: **You had started work with the House of Representatives subcommittee in 1959. I just want to see what you had done in between the end of the processing of the results of the 1950 census, which was roughly in 1953 when we started using UNIVAC I, and the time you went to the subcommittee**.

Goldfield: After the 1950 census, I was getting involved in things that were somewhat more varied and broader than just what the Bureau Population Division was doing. If my memory serves, it was 1954 when I became Chief, Statistical Reports Division, which at that time had been recently created. The Statistical Research Division was being recreated at the same time. I believe at the same moment–literally the same day–Bill Hurwitz was appointed Chief, Statistical Research Division, and I was appointed Chief, Statistical Reports Division. These two divisions comprised the main part of Morris Hansen's newly defined domain. He was by then the Assistant Director [for Research and Development], so we both reported to Hansen. I was in a new phase of my career, so to speak, with the Census Bureau.

Bohme: **Was this a new operation for the Bureau?**

Goldfield: It was an operation that grew and finally got organized into a division which produced the *Statistical Abstract of the United States* and its supplements, and a history of the 1950 census–*The 1950 Censuses–How They Were Taken*–and provided general oversight of publications; that's why it was called the Statistical Reports Division. It provided Bureauwide editorial service and was beginning to develop things like the *Data User News* and things of that sort. It was the forerunner of the organization that you're now a part of [the Data User Services Division]. We were developing things like the *County and City Data Book*, the *Congressional District Data Book*, the *State and Metropolitan Area Data Book*, and the *Historical Statistics of the United States*. So the *Statistical Abstract of the United States* program was becoming much larger, and then we had all these other things.

The Census Bureau then was beginning to develop a greater appreciation of the desirability of serving users–not so much the government agencies themselves, who are important users of census statistics and the more specialized users–but the more general users. There was more emphasis on the *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, on data books, and on user services. That was a good productive era that led to important developments, one of which was the attention given to Census history.

At the beginning of 1959, I was temporarily detached to help establish the House of Representative's Subcommittee on Census and Government Statistics, and in that interval I developed a broader perspective. I was no longer limited to the demographic side of the Census Bureau. It provided me with the opportunity to learn more about economic statistics and the administrative and operational aspects of the Census Bureau's work; I was getting more involved in the history of the Census Bureau and policy matters. I became a member of the Bureau's in-house committee on privacy and confidentiality and got to be involved in writing papers and giving talks on the Census Bureau generally and on subjects such as confidentiality. I also got more involved in representing the Bureau in dealings with other Federal agencies.

I guess that sort of qualified me to be designated as the person to go to Capitol Hill and represent the Census Bureau. It also qualified me to be involved in the emergency relocation operations of the Government. The Census Bureau had its own emergency relocation area, and I was one of the relatively few members who would mysteriously depart for parts unknown when there was a test of emergency preparedness going on. The Government as a whole had a much more elaborate relocation place underground. When exercises were conducted that involved the Government as a whole, I was "Mr. Census" at the central location for that period of time.

There was a slot for one person representing the Census Bureau and I was the one, so I made sure that things like the *Statistical Abstract of the United States* and all kinds of things like that were stocked there. When there was a signal that the Government was having such an exercise, I would ride off by myself with my memorized instructions on how to get there, which you were not even supposed to write down on a piece of paper. I think that is probably as much as could be said without improperly lifting the veil of secrecy. It was hard to keep it secret from the people who lived in the areas. People must have gotten somewhat suspicious seeing droves of people suddenly arriving and then disappearing, but that was a broadening experience too, and I guess now the Government does not feel that it has to do that anymore. At least I hope that is the case.

This is a period of time when, after something like 13 intensive years in the Bureau's Population Division, I became Assistant Director for Statistical Information in 1968, and later Assistant Director for Program Development [1969-1971]. I had an interesting time calling in the top people of each division one by one and

asking them to justify their programs and pumping them with questions on why they did not do this or why they did not do that. The one recurrent thing always was that no matter what division I was giving attention to at the time, they would always have ideas for new programs and expansion of existing programs. When I'd say, "Which of your existing programs would you trade in for these?" they always said "None of them." Everything was always plus and nothing minus, which wasn't very feasible from a budget standpoint.

I guess now I am trying to remember when I got back to the Census Bureau after that 86th Congress, which occupied the years of 1959 and 1960. At the end of the 86th Congress, I was succeeded by somebody else, another senior Census staff person was sent to work on Capital Hill; I came back to the Census Bureau as Chief, Statistical Reports Division. I had not yet become an assistant director. Bill Lerner, you may recall, was the Assistant Chief primarily responsible for the *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, and later on I had Ed Swan as Assistant Chief for the rest of the division's activities.

In 1968, I became Assistant Director for Statistical Information and Bill Lerner became the Division Chief. In November 1969, I was appointed Assistant Director for Program Development.

Bohme: **We are now looking at the late 1960's; did you see any major changes? I realize the decennial census changed quite a bit with the 1960 Census of Population and Housing. Were there other changes, particularly from your viewpoint where you saw certain conflicts and certain resolutions?**

Goldfield: One thing that was going on then was that the Bureau as maturing as the kind of agency it became beginning in 1940. By the end of the 1960's, Census was getting toward the time when people who had come to the agency as part of what is called the "Class of 1940" were leaving for other jobs or retiring. Joe Steinberg had gone off to be Chief Statistician for the Social Security Administration; Tom Jabine later followed in his footsteps. Other good statisticians came and went, like Eli Marks and Leon Gilford. I think Bill Hurwitz died in January 1969. It was a time when the Census Bureau no longer could keep going just on the momentum of the "Class of 1940" and the resurgence right after World War II; some people left to go into service and some came back and some did not.

The Census Bureau picked up some new people as well, but now it had to settle into a more steady kind of stride and pay more attention to recruiting new people.

By this time, though, there were at least two developments with respect to the supply of talent, one beneficial to the Census Bureau and one not beneficial. One was that the universities were turning out more trained statisticians; there were perhaps 24 major departments of statistics at the universities around the country, and there were more courses in statistics. Statistics was growing as a recognizable profession–I hesitate to say science–but I will say profession; so, the supply was probably greater in quantity and quality. The negative development was that the Census Bureau no longer had anything like a monopoly with respect to demand. It was competing with other Federal statistical agencies that had become "professionalized," like the Bureau of Labor Statistics and what used to be called the Office of Business Economics (now the Bureau of Economic Analysis), the statistical component of the Department of Agriculture, and others, such as the National Center for Health Statistics and the National Center for Education Statistics. Not only the Federal Government; State and local governments and industry were hiring statisticians and there were more positions for professors of statistics at universities. So the Census Bureau no longer had that special inducement for statisticians to want to come to work for it, partly because there was competition and partly because the Census Bureau was not so recognizable as [a place for] postgraduate development. The Bureau still had many fine senior statisticians, under whom it would have been a privilege to work, who were still doing innovative work; but, the Bureau did not have the unique representation any more; it had to share it. The Census Bureau, therefore, could not simply sit back and say, "We have a job opening," and expect that the best qualified people in the country would rush to apply for it.

That is even more true today. That is not a knock at the Census Bureau; it is just that this is the way the world goes. This is a period during which the supply of university trained statisticians are increasing.

I may be speaking more now of the 1970's and 1980's, but at one time the Census Bureau had so much "bench depth" that whenever a vacancy developed fairly high up the line there was always a highly qualified candidate within. That no longer is entirely true; evidence of that is, for example, the recruiting of Bob Groves from the University of Michigan to become the Associate Director for Statistical Standards and Methodology (as it was called up to a little while ago; now Statistical Design, Methodology, and Standards). It is good to know that the Census Bureau was able to get someone as highly qualified as Groves. In earlier

years, the Bureau would not have needed to do that, so things got to be a little different; it is an aspect of obtaining more maturity.

Beginning in the late 1960's and early 1970's and continuing to now, the Bureau is no longer rash and highly innovative, with young people running around and coming up with all kinds of crazy ideas, some of which turned out to be good. It still comes up with good ideas, but in a more mature way. Maybe if I were young, coming into the Census Bureau now, I would not find it quite as exciting as it was beginning in 1940, but maybe anything new is exciting to anybody that young. I was only 21 years old, but it seems good to me that over the decades of the 1960's, 1970's, and 1980's, the Census Bureau has managed to remain fairly stable, managed to find good people (maybe not as many as it would like), and managed to carry on its programs through budgetary ups and downs–better than some other agencies. I think that it probably has an ever-growing clientele and, therefore, needs to have an ever-growing variety of skills and expertise to deal with it. It is surprising the number of ways and number of places in which you find Census products being put to use, some ways in which even the people in the Bureau would not have imagined.

This leads me to another relevant digression, and that is about something I have tried to do over many years without any real success. I know other people have tried too; some have claimed that they can do it. I do not think they are right; others agree with me that it is probably impossible, and that is to measure the value of the output of an agency like the Census Bureau. All of us like to do cost-benefit analysis; we sometimes think we are supposed to do that in order to justify our appropriation requests.

When I was the Assistant Director for Program Development, I tried to do that in order to decide priorities. We had more ideas than we could afford, and the questions were: "Where should we put the money?" "What is worth more that something else? " Well, the obvious answer was that which has the greatest benefit-cost ratio. The right way to say it is "benefit" first, because that should be the numerator. I never found any good way to do it. I made up various devices for doing it; I would say, "Other things being equal, a program that provides more small-area detail is better than a program that provides less; a program that provides products more frequently is better than one than provides products less frequently," and so on. That is a problem that is not entirely peculiar to statistics; it is

much more true of statistics, however, than it is of producing, say, a physical product like an automobile or a bushel of wheat.

I have the feeling that virtually everything that the Census Bureau produces has benefits that are greater than its cost, but I do not have any way of proving that. I certainly do not have any way of measuring this so I can say: "This one has an absolute benefit of $6 million, which is twice its cost." I have no way of doing that. There is a fear among certain economists–not all of them agree–that anything that is freely available to all cannot have market value, and, therefore, its benefit cannot be measured. So if the Census Bureau puts out all of its statistics freely to everybody (not necessarily without some minor cost but available to everybody) then it does not give a measurable competitive advantage to any one person or organization that acquires the data. So, the Bureau is up against a problem; it would like to be able to say: "what we produce is worth a lot more than what it cost to produce; that is a bargain." But we cannot really say that except in an anecdotal way.

Bohme: **How did the Census Bureau move to Suitland, MD?**

Goldfield: When I came to the Census Bureau in June 1940, it was ensconced in a new office building at 2nd and D Streets, SW, in Washington, DC. It had moved there sometime not too long before I arrived. As I recall, it seems ironic now that some of the old-time Census people were complaining that that location was too far from downtown. Little did they know that 2 years later they would find themselves out in Suitland, Maryland, which in 1940 nobody had ever heard of.

I had nothing to do with the move. I was a junior member of the staff then, and the staff as a whole did not have anything to do with the move. As I recall the events of the time, however, what happened was that the Public Buildings Administration, which became part of the General Services Administration in 1949, had a while earlier started on a program of building general-purpose office buildings. They had gotten kind of weary of designing every building to meet the professed needs of the agency that was to occupy it and 8 years later finding out it was unsuitable for some other purpose. So, it thought that it would become more efficient and save architectural and design money to build a series of so-called Federal office buildings. As I recall, the building that the Census Bureau occupied in 1940 was Federal office building 1, which, I believe, was the first of a series to be built. Then Federal office building FOB 2 was constructed, and it became the Navy Annex building, I believe. Finally, Federal office building 3 was built on a

tract of land that came into Federal possession incognito at a location that nobody had ever heard of–on farm land in Suitland, Maryland.

I remember when we heard about that. Several of my colleagues and I piled into my car one Saturday and drove out to Suitland. We were told that to go to Suitland, you were to go east on Pennsylvania Avenue and when you got beyond the District line, ask the natives if they could direct you to Suitland. We did that, but most of the natives had not heard of Suitland either. We finally found it on a tract of land with farmhouses and barns on it and a big hole in the middle of the field where they were building the new building. We arrived by taking Suitland Road, which was then a narrow dirt road. Suitland Parkway did not exist then, nor did any of the apartment houses or stores or anything around here. But we were reassured by rumors–all of which turned out to be unfounded–that we would be given various perquisites to make up for our move into such a distant location: Special allowances for travel; various things would be built out here–recreation facilities, including a golf course and a swimming pool.

In any case, the way I heard the story was that as the building was being completed, the Census Bureau was not the agency designated to move out there. The next agency coming up in the Federal Government was the Office of Price Administration. So its staff said: “Well, we have a new building out in Maryland and it might be a suitable building in size for the Office of Price Administration.” Leon Henderson, who was designated to be the head of it, said: “It is all very nice, but I do not think it would be feasible for Office of Price Administration to be located that far away from civilization as we know it. People will need to get to us; we will need to interact with the other agencies of the Government. We need to be downtown.”

As the story goes on, J.C. Capt, then Director of the Census Bureau, volunteered to lend the Office of Price Administration the Census Bureau building, which was considered to be about the right size and not too distant from the downtown area “for the duration.” The Census Bureau would temporarily occupy this new building in Suitland and move back when the war and the emergency were over. So that was done. Again, as I heard the story, the Census Bureau moved to Suitland, MD, leaving a trail of punch cards all the way from 2nd and D Streets, SW, Washington. I mean that literally. When the Office of Price Administration finally did end, the fingerprint division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation took over

that building, which was in a way suitable, because they filled it up with punch-cards just as the Census Bureau had.

Years later, I was visited at my office at the Census Bureau by several people from the Government Accounting Office, I think it was, who were investigating proposals to locate Government agencies outside the immediate area of Washington, DC, either in the suburbs or elsewhere in the country. They asked about our experience. I said our experience was that we did not like the move at the time it happened; it was very dislocating–literally and otherwise–to us. We lost some of our people–not so many of the professional people–but clerical and secretarial people who could transfer to similar jobs in other agencies. They did not want to commute to Suitland, MD. I said: "But now that we have been here for some years, a labor market has built up in the area. The Census Bureau now has people who have moved to the Suitland area or to convenient commuting points around here. The agency has people that it had hired who wanted to work here because they had already taken up residence in this area; Census did not want to face a reverse dislocation to go back. I said: "We are probably all willing to stay settled down here with all of our equipment built in and our people more or less built in, rather than go back; I think that is the general attitude." So, the Bureau is still here, and nobody talks anymore about moving. Every once in a while during the time I was here, however, there were rumors that Census was going to move to Denver, to Salt Lake City, or to some other place, none of which, of course, turned out to be true. There were a lot of rumors at the time we moved here that this building had been built to be a warehouse, a factory, or a hospital, all of which were not true. The fact, as I understand it, is that it was built to be a general-purpose office building, and the Bureau converted it into a building with a configuration and facilities more or less suitable for the agency. The Bureau always felt, however, (especially after we got large computers) that it would have been nice to have a separate adjoining building for the data-processing equipment, with a separate dedicated power supply.

Later, when the Metro rail system was being planned, it was found that the plan included a line out to Suitland (which to this day still has not been completed). The General Services Administration was under severe criticism, and still is to some extent, for locating office buildings in places that were not easy for the residents of Washington, DC, to get to because they were not served well by public transportation and there was a lack of inexpensive housing in the area. The Gener-

al Services Administration saw this plan for having subway transit to Suitland as a boon. By that time, there were three or four buildings out here, yet there was still available federally owned land; so, the General Services Administration would not suffer the claim that they were putting it out of reach of the inner-city people because it would be reachable by subway. Besides that, more housing had developed in Suitland, and it was not particularly a high-rent district. It got to the point where the Census Bureau had a task force working with the General Services Administration on designs for the new building or buildings for the Census Bureau in Suitland. The Bureau was quite excited about that. It had all kinds of ideas. Bureau staff went to Ottawa, Canada and looked at the new specially designed building Statistics Canada had there. But when the General Services Administration came to realize how long it would be before the subway ever reached Suitland, if indeed it ever would, everything was put back in the file cabinet, where I guess it remains to this day.

Bohme: **Would it be of any interest to know who was on this task force or committee; do you remember any names?**

Goldfield: No; I cannot say I do. A lot of us provided ideas, and I am not sure what the formal organization was. Some day, maybe, the Census Bureau will get a new building or building complex. If so, it will probably be out here, but the last I heard the Metro Green Line would be coming out this way if there are not any further changes of plans which might redirect the line. So, there is no sense for any of us holding our breaths to wait for that to happen. Well, so much for Suitland. By now, there are at least some people who recognize the existence of Suitland because of the agencies that are located here; but, in effect, the Bureau's staff felt back in 1942 that they were pioneers.

Well, let me review my career at the Census Bureau just a little bit more. As I already said, I came to the Census Bureau in 1940 along with a horde of other people, and I was first assigned to the Population Division, which was not unusual. Most of the new employees were assigned to that division, as it was engaged then in taking the 1940 Census of Population and Housing. Many of the activities that are now in separate Bureau divisions were then within the Population Division. After a week of training–during which I virtually memorized the enumerator's handbook for the 1940 census and passed the test on it–I was assigned to be co-chief of one of the clerical processing operations for that census. Because I was selected from the junior statistician register, I was told that I would be in line

for professional, rather than clerical, supervisory jobs as they opened up. Sure enough, in a matter of several months, I found myself working for Ross Eckler as a junior statistician in the Employment and Income Statistics Branch of the Population Division. After some years of working on labor-force and income statistics from the census and the current surveys, I got to be program coordinator for the 1950 Censuses of Population and Housing.

One of the things I had done in preparation for this census was that I developed what I guess was the Census Bureau's first decision table. I didn't even know at the time I was doing it. In fact, I don't think the term was used then. This had to do with the coding of employment status. Coding employment status from the answers to a battery of questions in the 1940 census was one of the most complicated, time consuming, and, I might even say, inaccurate pieces of work in processing the census. Determining the employment status involved looking at a whole set of entries on the census schedule. A lot of those questions were filled out improperly or incompletely. They were questions that were difficult for respondents to understand and even for enumerators to apply well. So it was a tedious job to do. The coders would frequently put their hands up for some technical expert to come around and look at a set of entries to determine what the right code should be. There was a certain amount of guesswork involved which was not always uniformly applied. We were going to have substantially the same set of questions in the 1950 census. I had had a lot of experience working on the 1940 census and, in the years following, on the Current Population Survey, which had the equivalent set of questions in it. I knew pretty well what was the best thing to do with any set of entries, whether they were the correct and consistent set of entries or incorrect and inconsistent. I worked out a huge table that filled up a very large sheet of paper. It accounted for every possible combination of entries, including missing ones, and for all the questions that would have some bearing on determining employment status–even the ones that were not supposed to be directly involved but would be looked at in resolving cases of incomplete or inconsistent reporting. The table involved something like 15 different questionnaire items–including age, relationship, if the person was institutionalized–in addition to the basic labor-force questions. As I recall, in determining all the possible groups of entries that would end up in determining a code, I had something like 2,180 different combinations, for which I assigned a specific code. Now, this made it possible to code by machine. You would punch all the entries, and the machine would look at all of the information and determine a code.

Bohme: **You assigned these codes manually?**

Goldfield: In 1940, we did.

Bohme: **When you made up this decision table for the 2,100 and some odd possibilities, you assigned those codes manually, did you not?**

Goldfield: I wrote down what the codes should be for anyone of those combinations or permutations, but then they were programmed into the tabulators to do the actual processing of the census. That converted what had been a very tedious, time-consuming, and expensive clerical operation with very little standardization into a completely standardized automatic thing. I was told later that this saved the Census Bureau many hundreds of thousands of dollars–and those were 1950 dollars. So, that is one thing I did by way of preparing for the 1950 census.

Then, I found myself as program coordinator for the 1950 census, which you can imagine was a very interesting position to have. There is not a lot to say about the 1950 census, except that it happened to be at a time when there was not a great deal of controversy about privacy and confidentiality. That issue had affected the 1940 census, which was the first one that contained an inquiry on income. That created a public uproar. The 1950 census also was not subject to some of the controversy that developed in connection with the later censuses about undercounting, disproportionate missing of population groups, and resurgent concern about privacy and confidentiality. It was a kind of low-profile census. Also, it was a transitional census between punchcard equipment and computer, between line schedules and household schedules, and various other things.

Bohme: **Now, when you say you were program coordinator, what more generally did you do? For example, was this something like Dave Kaplan's job in the 1970 census?**

Goldfield: It was a precursor of Dave Kaplan's job, but his started much earlier in the decade. The important part of Dave's job was the rather considerable staff he had planning for the census.

Bohme: **What did you do in the way of planning for the 1950 census?**

Goldfield: I did the decision table and things of that sort and participated in planning the tabulations for the economic data obtained in that census. I had been working in the area of labor-force and income statistics, but as program coordinator my prime responsibility was to observe, record, and report on everything that was going on from the time the census started in the field through to completion. I had a relatively small

crew of people. We put out weekly progress reports. I met with the Chief of the Population Division and people representing tabulation activities and every thing else, not only every week when we put out a report, but every day on various things, and tried to spot bottlenecks and problems as early as possible.

Bohme: **Did you get involved with any of the test censuses for 1950? I seem to remember that there were a few–as distinguished from the earlier censuses where this did not happen.**

Goldfield: Yes, indeed I did. I made myself the chief observer for the test censuses, especially the dress rehearsal that took place in Georgia and South Carolina in 1949. Atlanta had a big-city test, and then there were rural areas–counties in Georgia and South Carolina, as I recall.

Bohme: **Do you happen to remember who was responsible for the idea of having test censuses? Basically, it seemed to be a 1950 censuses' phenomenon.**

Goldfield: No, there was a 1940 test census in Indiana in 1939; I cannot say who was responsible, because the idea antedated me. As I recall, it was in St. Joseph and Marshall Counties, Indiana. It was not an original idea for 1950. I do not know whose original idea it was for 1940; I'm sure that in some informal kind of way there must have been some testing, some dress rehearsal, some trying out before other censuses too. The opportunity for doing that, of course, really developed when the Census Bureau became a permanent Bureau in 1902. Before that, when it was a census office that was recreated every decade, there was not much opportunity even to plan the census, let alone test it.

Bohme: **Did Morris Ullman, who prepared the 1950 census history, work for you?**

Goldfield: Yes; at one time he did. In some ways, I was his successor and in other ways we were colleagues. At one point, he did not work for me, and then he left the Census Bureau to go to the Division of Statistical Standards in the Bureau of the Budget–now the Statistical Policy Office in the Office of Management and Budget. I had a hand in the 1950 census history, and he was the man who principally wrote it. He did a lot of things of that sort, and I had many occasions to work with him.

While I was still engaged during the 1940's in that area of the Population Division (which originally had been called the Employment and Income Statistics Branch), one thing I did was to make the first seasonal adjustments of the employment and unemployment figures and rates in what is now called the Current Population Sur-

vey. Before analysis and publication were turned over to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Census Bureau was entirely responsible not only for running the survey and for processing the data, as it still is, but also for publishing the reports. The Census Bureau simply published the absolute figures, and the press release was put out through the Office of the Secretary of Commerce every month. The Census Bureau would comment that "employment increased in July over June," but nobody could tell from that observation whether things were getting better or worse. So, I attempted to produce some seasonally adjusted figures. What I was working with were figures for the first half of the 1940 decade and a little beyond. This was during the war years, when there were steep changes resulting from other than seasonal factors, so I had to use a technique that was more or less workable with figures like that. It still gave results that you had to be a little skeptical about, because that was an atypical period of time; the seasonal patterns in the labor-force statistics are so obvious that you could work out some pretty good adjustment factors. Then, for a period, we were putting out reports in which we would show the original figures and the seasonally-adjusted figures. This gave some of the "spin doctors" (we did not use that term then) who worked in the front office of the Department of Commerce a choice of which number to emphasize. If the seasonally-adjusted figures looked better, they might choose to emphasize those; if the absolute figures looked better they might choose those even though I and others were writing the original drafts of the press releases.

Today, the release of seasonally-adjusted figures on employment and unemployment from the Current Population Survey and many other kinds of statistics are so common that the media does not even take note of the fact that what they are writing about are the seasonally-adjusted figures. Every month you will see a headline that employment or unemployment increased or decreased, and it is not even mentioned that those are not the real figures. If the media say that there are 8 million unemployed, they are talking about a seasonally-adjusted figure. The real number of unemployed people–if the survey is accurate–is something different, but people have gotten so accustomed to the seasonally-adjusted figures that they accept them as the basic figures. That worries me a little bit. I will not say I created a monster, and I certainly will not take credit for the use of seasonal adjustment now.

In later years, when we were able to add greater resources, and had longer periods and better years to work with, we got a lot more sophisticated about seasonal ad-

justment. Jules Shiskin [Assistant Director for Program Development at the Census Bureau, 1968-1969, and later Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics] was one who contributed a great deal to helping design the X-11 seasonal-adjustment procedure. I was on an interagency committee later when I was responsible for putting out the *Business Cycle Developments* publications [which was first published in 1961]. Geoffrey Moore, then the Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, said to me: "You're putting out the monthly compendium that everybody looks at for all the key economic indicators. They are all seasonally adjusted except for one series that comes from the Bureau of Labor Statistics–the Consumer Price Index. I feel as though we are being discriminated against." I said: "Geoff, I didn't know that the Consumer Price Index had a seasonal pattern in it." He said: "I made a study of that, and I found that two or three of the months varied by 0.1 percent seasonally." So we finally agreed that that series also should have the privilege of being seasonally adjusted.

I digress; I am still back around 1950, still overlapping with our previous discussion, but I do want to talk about some of the things I did back then. I think I had, in retrospect, a little bit to do with naming the Current Population Survey. It was originally, as you know, started by the Works Progress Administration [the name changed in 1939 to Work Projects Administration] as a measure of unemployment, and it was called the Sample Survey of Unemployment. The report put out was sometimes referred to as the *Monthly Report on Unemployment*. When the Work Projects Administration finally went out of business in 1942, the survey had established itself so well that there was no question about continuing it. The question only was who would continue it. There was competition among the agencies, with the Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the Bureau of Employment Security being the chief bidders. Not to the satisfaction of all concerned, responsibility was awarded to the Census Bureau. By that time, we were referring to the Monthly Report on the Labor Force, because the emphasis changed from being concerned about how many people were unemployed and what their characteristics were to being concerned about where the country was getting its labor supply from. The Government was concerned about a shortage of labor rather than a surplus.

About that time, I was doing studies based on the 1940 Census of Population and Housing data on where the sources of supply might be: What was the potential among housewives? What percent of them had children of preschool age, and so

on? I was using tabulations from sample card C, which was the fertility card, for the purpose of examining possible sources of labor supply. Anyway, the Bureau of Labor Statistics had not really given up on its quest for proprietorship of that survey, so every once in a while the Department of Labor would send a letter to the Director of the Bureau of the Budget (now the Office of Management and Budget) saying: "This is a survey of labor, and it really belongs in the Bureau of Labor Statistics." That "statement" would be referred to the Division of Statistical Standards within the Bureau of the Budget, and then it would be sent back to the Census Bureau for a rejoinder. I would be called upon to draft a letter of response, and my theme typically was: "This is not just a labor survey; it is a demographic survey. It is a household survey, and the Census Bureau asks questions about education, mobility, fertility, family status, and various things like that, including questions about employment and unemployment. In fact, it is really a current population survey." The Census Bureau finally decided that it should officially call it the Current Population Survey to emphasize that it is not just a labor-force survey. Later, the Division of Statistical Standards–it had various names over the years, but I will call it that for the convenience of reference–made a Solomon-like decision, in effect, to cut the baby in half and to give the Bureau of Labor Statistics the responsibility for analyzing and publishing those results of the Current Population Survey that had to do with employment and unemployment. The Census Bureau, which is known as the data-collection and data-processing agency, would continue to collect and process the statistics and continue to be responsible for analyzing and publishing reports on the various demographic characteristics coming from the survey. It also had the job of adding supplements to the Current Population Survey on behalf of some particular agency. This is the situation that still exists. In return, the Bureau of the Budget arranged for a couple of statistical enterprises to be transferred from the Bureau of Labor Statistics to the Census Bureau, like producing statistics on building permits and housing starts. So it was like a trade between baseball teams where you trade a pitcher for a second baseman.

Anyway, during the 1940's and early 1950's, one of the Census Bureau's and my chief interest was to nurture the Current Population Survey. That is so well established now that I guess everybody thinks of it as a major permanent part of the Federal statistical system, but in its early days it was very experimental. The whole idea, in fact, of using current activity status as a basis for determining the employment status of people and serving as a filter for asking questions on oc-

cupation, industry, earnings, and so on, was a novel idea in 1940. It changed from the so-called "gainful worker" approach in earlier censuses, which did not provide a good way to measure something as temporary and as volatile as unemployment.

While I am on that subject, if you don't mind my talking about CPS and labor force, it reminds me of the earlier 1937 Enumerative Check Census of Unemployment. My feeling is that there are some very important, almost revolutionary developments in Federal statistics which got their start or became prominent somewhere in the 1930's and the 1940's. It was a privilege for me and the other members of my cohort to be involved in that and to have the opportunity to contribute to it.

One of the great developments then was probability sampling. It's hard to believe now, but before sometime in the 1930's there was hardly any sampling that could really be called scientific sampling going on in surveys, in the census, or any other application. There was some good quality work going on in agricultural research using Latin squares in agricultural experiments actually out on the land, but as far as survey work was concerned or taking censuses, probability sampling was almost an unknown concept. What sampling was done was not scientific sampling by today's standards.

I would trace probability sampling, which is so fundamental to so many things we do now, back to the late 1930's. In the mid-1930's, during the depths of the Depression, nobody knew how many unemployed people there were or who they were, and people were relying on estimates put out by various groups and individuals. Later on, when I was working in this field, I took some dates during that period and put them on a chart along with the unemployment estimates (made by different groups and individuals) running from lowest for any particular date to the highest. They matched the position on the political spectrum of the organizations and individuals who were putting them out, with the most conservative people giving the lowest estimates of unemployment and the radical people giving the highest estimates. That was the kind of information we had to work with then.

There was a lot of talk going on for a large-scale survey of unemployment in the mid-1930's. Among those involved in the planning were Fred [Frederick F.] Stephan and Sam [Samuel A.] Stouffer, along with Cal [Calvert L.] Dedrick of the Census Bureau, who then was head or assistant head of the Bureau's Statistical Research Division. Finally, the Government decided that you could not do much

with a survey; people were very skeptical about surveys then. Congress passed a law authorizing a complete census of unemployment; it was taken via the post office in 1937. (Postal carriers delivered a simple postcard form to every residential address, and unemployed persons were supposed to fill out and return the forms.) It was a voluntary census, and there were serious questions raised by some of these very same people and others who knew statistics, about its completeness and accuracy.

It soon became pretty evident that it was not complete and it was not accurate. This led to the designing and conducting of the so-called Enumerative Check Census of Unemployment. This was a good, well-planned sample survey, which was done not just by people filling out postcards and turning them back to the U.S. Postal Service (as in 1937) but by person-to-person enumeration. Calvert Dedrick had brought Morris Hansen into the Bureau by then, and the planning of this survey was one of Hansen's first major achievements.

Bohme: **You said earlier that the Government decided that there should be a continuing monthly survey. Could you be more specific–was it Congress, was it Department of Labor, was it the Administration, or do you know?**

Goldfield: I don't know. Again, this is really hearsay to me, although I did work with some of the people who worked on it. My understanding, however, is that it was the Government's emergency agencies that were the moving figures behind this. As I recall, John D. Biggers was commissioned to preside over the unemployment census; but I think, however, that it was the Works Projects Administration that was the moving spirit behind it. The Government desperately needed information and, as I said, the kinds of estimates that people were conjuring up were not very helpful. As it turned out, the voluntary census of unemployment was not very helpful either; but, it was a good test case of how you can sometimes get better information with a sample survey than you can get with a so-called census.

There were people at the Census Bureau, including Leon Truesdell, who never quite accepted that, although he certainly felt free to criticize even census figures. Of course, he was so knowledgeable about them, but he never felt quite comfortable about sample surveys.

Another name that should be mentioned about that time was Ed Deming [W. Edwards Deming], whom I worked with in the early 1940's at the Census Bureau. He was brought in as something like mathematical adviser to the Chief of the

Population Division, particularly to work on sampling. The 1940 census was the first census to have sampling as a part of it; so, it was a revolutionary census in that respect. Every census since then has been dependent more and more on sampling, to the point where the majority of the people who receive the short-form questionnaire in the census–the 100-percent part–are a little puzzled at how inadequate the census seems to be when looking at the form that they receive. As to the people who receive the long-form questionnaire, at least some of them are knowledgeable enough to complain that, by the luck of the draw, they were saddled with a whole battery of questions. Most of them, I think, understand now the system by which the censuses have been taken in one fashion or another from 1940 to the present date.

A good deal of credit should be given to people like Fred Stephan (who did not necessarily show up in any historical rosters as Census Bureau staff) for the contributions that they made. There were others, like Bill [William G.] Cochran and who served as high-level statistical advisors and pitched in and really did work. So one of the great developments of that era around 1940 was probability sampling, including the introduction of sampling in the census, the Enumerative Check Census of Unemployment (which was a landmark), and the invention of what is now the Current Population Survey, which was first operated by the Works Projects Administration.

There was a division of research in the Works Projects Administration then that was headed by Howard Myers, and with a good staff including John Webb and two bright mathematical statisticians named J. Stevens Stock and Lester Frankel. I had the pleasure not too long after that of taking a course on sample surveys given by Stock and Frankel (as well as another course on sample surveys given by W. Duane Evans and Jerome Cornfield). Frankel, who is still around and whom I still see frequently, is executive vice-president of Audits and Surveys, Inc., one of the better private survey firms. Stock and Frankel in those days worked so closely together at the Works Projects Administration and in their teaching that we tended to refer to them collectively as Stockel.

The Survey of Unemployment was timed to begin officially the week of March 24 through March 30, 1940. It covered the same set of employment-status questions in the 1940 census, which was taken as of April 1. Later on, one of my jobs was to make a comparison of the figures that came from that first sample survey and the figures that were tabulated (you had to wait a year or two for those) from

the decennial census. I concluded that the figures from the survey were better, except it could not provide geographic detail or much subject detail. At the national level, the survey data were better; they got relatively better as the enumerators who worked on the survey became experienced and better trained.

Bohme: **Did you match a sample of Current Population Survey to the census?**

Goldfield: Yes, I also matched the data from the census to various other things, and eventually I wrote a report which the Census Bureau published showing adjusted 1940 census figures for employment and unemployment. So, talk of adjusting the census is not all as new as it seems to sound to some people these days.

Bohme: **It must have been quite a laborious task to match cases for the Current Population Survey to the manuscript census.**

Goldfield: Yes, it was, and we worked on that project for quite a while. Then the adjusted figures that I produced for that last week in March 1940 became the benchmark–the first base for the Current Population Survey (as it was later named)–and the figures people would use rather than the census figures. Individuals would go back to the 1940 census for details, however, like tabulations showing 400 different occupational groups and things like that, that I could not possibly adjust. That kind of situation is still true today, but as I was saying, adjusting the census is not a mortal sin as some people seem to think. It depends on how you are adjusting and what your adjusting. It is not a matter of canonical law that if something is "engraved on stone tablets," you do not try to change it. I never took the attitude, from all that I have learned from the inside about censuses and surveys, that the results were engraved on stone tablets.

Anyway, this was one of the great developments that really began, got up steam, and developed well because all these wonderful people happened to be around then. Bill Hurwitz had joined Morris Hansen at the Census Bureau by then. Over the years, the Current Population Survey has been refined, improved, grown, and become a worldwide standard for sample household surveying.

Later on, I spent a very pleasant time traveling around all the European countries spreading the gospel of household sample surveys, particularly for labor-force figures. I went to countries that are now consider to be among the most developed in the world but were undeveloped countries then relative to the United States in this area–France, Britain, Italy, Spain, Scandinavia, and so on. After I had traveled around, I then brought back to this country the following year a group of about 20 top European statisticians affiliated with the central statistical organiza-

tions of these countries for an intensive training program of several months. This resulted in the publication of a book called *Papers on Labor Force Statistics in the United States.* Those papers, in effect, were a transcript of lectures they attended, and the papers also served to plant the seeds for conducting surveys in other countries.

I remember being told that France was going to run an experimental survey. The survey's test would be whether it produced a figure that would agree with the official figure based (in effect) on unemployment compensation administrative records. If so, the survey would be considered good and there would be support for it to continue. I said: "I hate to have you subjected to that kind of a test. In the first place, the survey is not intended to give the same figure as the figure based on administrative records; in the second place, even if it did, you would have to allow for considerable sampling and nonsampling error in making a comparison." Well, by sheer coincidence, it happened to hit the figure almost on the nose and they have had a successful survey going ever since; that was just luck. I almost was disappointed to see that happen, because I predicted it would not happen.

The development of population sampling has grown ever since. I had a little to do with various aspects of the development, but I still look up at the eminence of people like Deming, Hansen, Stephan, Hurwitz, Bill Madow [William G. Madow], and others who made such contributions. Those include the two-volume work on sample surveys methods and theory, of which Hansen, Hurwitz, and Madow were the principal authors with input from a lot of the rest of the Census Bureau staff. The publication is still a bible in the field. Deming had already put out a book on survey sampling by then, and I took his course on it; but the Hansen, Hurwitz, and Madow book–which is really how we take the Current Population Survey–is much more of a "how to do" manual, but includes the theory as well.

Another great development that you can trace back to the 1940's is computers, which you can say started with ENIAC (Electronic Numerical Integrator and Calculator) in the 1940's. Then the Census Bureau conceived the notion that people who dreamed up ENIAC could be put to work developing an electronic computer that would be designed particularly to do large-scale data processing rather than particularly designed to solve multiple simultaneous equations that are involved in military research, which what ENIAC was for.

By the time I came to the Census Bureau in 1940, it had been using electric punchcard equipment for censuses from 1890 into 1940, and it was a well estab-

lished program. I had to learn how to do plugboards for the tabulating machine–the equivalent of later programming computers. We know all about Herman Hollerith and what he did in the 1880's and James Powers and others who followed him. By the time I came to the Census Bureau, this kind of work was considered to be "old hat," and by the mid-1940's, under Morris Hansen's leadership, Bill Madow, Jim McPherson, and others were already talking to [J. Presper] Eckert and [John W.] Mauchly about whether they could adapt ENIAC into a machine that would be useful to the Census Bureau. It was decided that they could, and the Census Bureau contracted with them through the National Bureau of Standards. Sam Alexander and others had Eckert and Mauchly draw up plans for some kind of an electronic (vacuum tube in those days) data-processing computer and then followed it up with a contract to build what became UNIVAC I, Serial 1–the first of that series.

That machine actually did some of that tabulation toward the end of processing the 1950 census; so again, the census that I was program coordinator of was a transitional census. It started as a punchcard census and ended up as a computer census, blazing a trail for future censuses and current programs. Later, FOSDIC (film optical sensing device for input to computers) was invented in the 1950's [for use in the 1960 Census of Population and Housing].

Another great development, besides probability sampling and computers, was the use of administrative records as a source of statistics. People do not tend to think of that as revolutionary. I cannot say it started in the late 1930's or thereabouts, because if you think about it, the very first statistics we ever had were really statistics based on administrative records. I once had a complete collection of all the *Statistical Abstracts of the United States.* The early editions essentially contained data on the decennial census, the financial operation of the Government, and foreign trade. Even before there was a United States, the colonies were producing such statistics, and those were really, in effect, administrative data. In those days, the Government was getting most of its revenue from customs duties, and those statistics were byproducts of that. So, I cannot say that statistics from administrative records, in that sense, were anything invented by my era. There has been much wider use of administrative records as frames for taking the census and frames for selecting samples in surveys as well as to provide direct substitutes for statistics that you would otherwise have to collect by a census and survey. That practice really began flourishing in the 1930's and continues to the present day.

One of the first big examples was the County Business Patterns, which began in 1946 and was a joint venture between the Social Security Administration and the Census Bureau. [The Department of Commerce's Office of Domestic Commerce published the series in 1951 when the task was transferred to the Census Bureau.] In effect, the Social Security Administration and the Census Bureau were saying to one another, "Look, the Census Bureau is running all these surveys and taking all these censuses of business establishments, and here the Social Security system had developed to the point where we have got coverage of the great bulk of American business in our Social Security records. Why cannot we produce statistics every year instead of relying on a census every 5 years and small scale surveys in between?" That was an early use of administrative records as a source of statistics that otherwise would have had to be obtained by expensive, laborious censuses and surveys. County Business Patterns was so named because it could produce statistics in great detail for every county in the United States from the Social Security records. It is still going on; it actually represents a combination of survey and administrative records sources, but you do some surveying to embellish the raw materials from the records to try to "break up" data for multi-establishment firms. So I look upon that as another great development of this era that the Census Bureau was a major participant in.

Maybe confidentiality also is a great development of that era. Again, it was not something "handed down from the mountain," and it was not until the legislation for the census of 1930 that the Bureau had something that really could provide pretty complete, statutory protection of its records. Even then, it needed further development.

By the time of the St. Regis [St. Regis Paper Company] case in the late 1950's, we were pretty complacent. I say "we" because I was still at the Census Bureau then, and one of my responsibilities was policy matters with respect to confidentiality and legal matters. I guess at that time, [Mathew E.] Erickson, who was then the Chief Legal Counsel for the Census Bureau, was reporting to me. We were pretty complacent about title 13 and all the protection it gave to the respondents in the decennial censuses and the surveys, but it turned out we were not as secure as we thought we were.

In the latter 1950's, the Federal Trade Commission was engaging in what some people might called a "fishing expedition" or a "witch hunt." What they were doing was looking for evidence of anti-trust procedures in certain industries. Some

of their emissaries came to me and said: “We have a list of companies in this industry that we would like to check out, and we would like to see the records that you have from the census of manufactures and whatever else you have from these companies.” I said: “No, you cannot see them,” as was the case in all the face-offs I had with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Secret Service, and others. They were surprised and appalled, and could not believe that I was telling them that the Census Bureau was not going to help them do the work that was important to the welfare of the country. I was insistent about it, however, and I told them (as I had told the representatives of other such agencies): “Go back and check with your legal authority, and I think you will find that I am right.” They did so, and they found that the census records, particularly from the census of manufactures, which they were especially interested in, could not be given to them by the Census Bureau, even for a worthy cause. I said to them: “You are a regulatory agency; you are armed with legislation that gives you the authority to compel any companies, firms, or establishments that you are interested in to give you information that is appropriate to your regulatory responsibility. You can take a blank census form and copy it over and put your name on it, and say: ‘This is what we are demanding of you,’ and send it to whatever company you want and get the same information.”

They said: “No, that would not be satisfactory. If we get a form that the company gave to the Census Bureau, we would believe that it would have been honestly filled out under the guarantee of confidentiality that the Census gave. The [company officials] would have responded to the census because they felt that no harm would result, and that they were interested in helping to produce good statistics for their industry. But if the Federal Trade Commission asked for the same answers for the same questions in our own name, this is like asking them to testify against themselves. We will not get results that are as credible [as the census]. We want to be able to walk into court and wave a copy of a census questionnaire and say: ‘Here is what the company honestly reported against itself, and it shows it is unduly dominant in this industry or whatever.’” My response to the Federal Trade Commission was not satisfactory to it.

Then they learned that when the Census Bureau took economic censuses, the material suggested to respondents that they keep a copy of the questionnaire that they sent back to the Bureau. More precisely, firms received an extra blank questionnaire copy for this purpose which said: “If we have any questions about your

return, you will have a copy to look at while we are asking you these questions; or, when you get the next questionnaire for the next census or survey, you can look at how you filled out the previous one." So, a lot of the companies kept copies as a general practice. The Federal Trade Commission got to thinking: "Well, if we cannot get the questionnaires from the Census Bureau, we will subpoena the copies from the company." They did so in a number of cases, some of then were brought to court because the companies challenged the subpoenas on the grounds that their census returns were supposed to be confidential.

One of the cases that went to the courts was one involving Beatrice Foods, another involved the Borden Company, and another involved the St. Regis Paper Company. These cases first came under the jurisdiction of U.S. district courts, and then to U.S. appellate courts in various parts of the United States which handed down conflicting conclusions. In a couple of the cases, the Federal Trade Commission's position was upheld, and in other cases, the company was upheld. That is, the courts said, in effect (I think I am quoting one of the decisions), "The United States has given its word and it should not be overturned," but then in cases like St. Regis (368 U.S. 208), the decision went the other way. The court there said they thought that the Federal Trade Commission was going about its business in a proper way, and that they needed to get the information. They did not see that the cloak of protection extended to a copy in the files of the company. So, a final decision was needed by the U.S. Supreme Court.

In 1961, the Supreme Court took up the case and decided by a vote of 6 to 3 that much as they appreciated the importance of confidentiality, they could not read into title 13 a specific statement that Congress intended that copies kept by respondents were immune to legal process. Had Congress intended that, it should have said so specifically; so, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Federal Trade Commission (82 S. Ct. 289).

Immediately, stories appeared in all the trade publications all over the country saying: "Your census records are not as confidential as you thought they were." A great many of those stories were not quite accurate; they did not specify that it was still true that any records kept by the Census Bureau were still solidly protected. This had to do specifically with the census of manufactures; it did not necessarily apply to other things, but the stories were scary enough that response started dropping off in the Bureau's business surveys. Word was getting around, as I said, that there was something wrong with the confidentiality. Businesses

pulled out their questionnaires that they had in their files and burned them, and many of them stopped responding to census inquiries. The Bureau was spending more money on followup and still ending up with a lower response rate. It affected things beyond the real scope of the survey, so a lot of organizations expressed the need for remedial legislation, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and such organizations as the American Economic Association and the American Statistical Association.

Despite opposition to remedial legislation from the Federal Trade Commission, the Census Bureau wrote an official letter to the Bureau of the Budget saying: "We think things should remain as they are now. We are happy with the U.S. Supreme Court decision; we do not want any legislation to overturn it." The Bureau of the Budget finally decided it would support remedial legislation provided the language was very specific and referred specifically to census reports. They did not want legislation that could be construed as saying that anything the business chose to put in its file cabinet would be immune from subpoena by the Federal Trade Commission, [or] the Department of Justice. Anyway, bills were introduced in the Congress and eventually a bill was passed to amend title 13. On September 19, 1962, the bill was reported out by the House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, which included the Subcommittee on Census and Government Statistics, and by the corresponding Senate committee less than 2 weeks later. In another 2 weeks it was passed, approved, and signed. It amended section 9A of title 13 to refer to copies of census reports.

In the interim, though, when the first impact of the St. Regis case occurred, the Census Bureau felt it necessary to revise the statement of confidentiality that appeared on all its questionnaires to say that any copies you may retain in your files are not protected. So the Census Bureau helped foment the decline in response rates, but it felt obligated to do so. Once the legislation was enacted, the Bureau was happy to send out notices saying: "Everything is fine now, and we have even stronger confidentiality than we ever had before."

It is remarkable to think that the Census Bureau, to this day alone among Government agencies, has statutory authority to guarantee confidentiality not only to what it has in its own files but to confer this blanket of protection around a piece of paper that a business has in its file. That piece of paper in that file cabinet has this invisible wrapping around it that distinguishes it from everything else in the file cabinet which may be subject to subpoena. That is a rather remarkable exten-

sion of confidentiality. I have been wishing for years that the Census Bureau would lose its unique position, in the sense that it would continue to be as well protected on confidentiality as it is, but that other agencies would be able to enjoy that same kind of ability to make statute-backed guarantees of confidentiality, which to this day they do not. In fact, there is a case going on now involving the Energy Information Administration, which has lost a battle against the Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice. The Department of Justice can procure them from the Energy Information Administration–copies of statistical forms that energy companies sent in to the Energy Information Administration under a guarantee of confidentiality. The Energy Information Administration gave this guarantee because it felt that it should. It does not really have the statutory authority to back it up, so they are going through a kind of St. Regis situation right now. I don't know if they are going to attract the attention of the U.S. Supreme Court eventually, but I wish that other agencies that are engaged in statistical work and are not engaged in regulatory-enforcement prosecutorial work could have the same benefits as those of the Census Bureau. I have often said that I think that the most important asset the Bureau has is the ability to promise confidentiality.

I would like to quote something Janet Norwood, the Commissioner of Labor Statistics, said at a meeting of our Committee on National Statistics just last month: "Confidentiality not only has to be maintained; it has to be defended with eternal vigilance." I agree with that. When I was at the Census Bureau, I turned down many worthy applicants for accessing census data. Although the Bureau incurs the enmity of some people for turning them down when they feel they have a worthy objective, once you open the door a crack, then you cannot close it to everybody else. I am a little bit dubious about the old census records being opened by the Archives, although to tell the truth I have not seen any evidence of damage resulting from that, but we fought that one too.

Part of my involvement in the 1950 census was that I was on loan from the Census Bureau to the Social Science Research Council to coordinate the production of the series of 1950 census monographs, which I think was a successful venture and led to other such series.

It was a nice idea to have senior members of the Census Bureau staff, and in certain cases other experts, invited to produce thoughtful, analytical research-oriented volumes on various subjects from the decennial census. It was kind of a reward to some of the people associated with the Census Bureau, people like Con-

rad Taeuber and others, who authored census monographs. It also was a contribution to public knowledge; it goes back in a way to the days when the Census Bureau or the predecessor Census Office did not really have a professional staff of its own. The only way it could get out scholarly studies would be to hire what were called "special agents." Now, the census monograph program was kind of a descendant of that, but it did not have to rely entirely on outside people because the Census Bureau had more in-house talent than it used to have.

Another thing I was involved in was to visit European countries to spread the seeds of scientific household sample surveys.

Bohme: **Who sponsored your trips?**

Goldfield: When I was traveling in Europe, my trips were by the predecessors of the Agency for International Development. I think that on one trip, I started out under the aegis of the Economic Cooperation Administration and came back under the aegis of the Mutual Security Agency. In those days, the country's foreign aid program was so controversial, especially between the administration and the Congress, that every year or two it seemed the only way to continue the program would be to say: "Well, this agency has not been successful, so we will abolish it, and we will create a new agency and the Congress can appropriate money for a newly chartered agency." So, we went through a whole set of different names, and finally the Government settled on the name the Agency for International Development. Then, things settled down.

I did get a chance to spend a considerable amount of time in international activities before I became the head of the International Statistical Program Center.

In 1954, as I recall, I finally left the Census Bureau's Population Division. I became Chief of the newly created Statistical Reports Division, which was one of two divisions that were being created at the same time (the other being the Statistical Research Division headed by Bill Hurwitz). He and I reported to Morris Hansen.

Among the things that I am pleased about in connection with the work of the Statistical Reports Division was that we had a number of different functions having to do with almost any aspect of publishing Census Bureau reports. I am thinking now, for example, of building up the *Statistical Abstract of the United States* program. This involved not only improving it in terms of completeness, in terms of the documentation, and in terms of getting it released faster, but developing a whole series of supplementary volumes.

When the Statistical Reports Division was created, of course, the *Statistical Abstract of the United States* had already been in existence for a very long time; there had already been a *County and City Data Book*–at first a *Cities Supplement* [1944] then a *County Data Book* [1947], and finally the first *County and City Data Book* [1949]. Once the division was established and I was the Chief with a very good staff, the division also produced new editions of *Historical Statistics of the United States* and the *Congressional District Data Book* and created the *State and Metropolitan Area Data Book* and books on sources of statistics. The Statistical Reports Division made improvements in the *County and City Data Book.* So, it has become quite an enterprise now, and there are many who have become users of Census data because they have those books or have access to them–particularly the users who are interested in a given city, State, county, or metropolitan area who do not have the patience or the ability to wade through all the Census volumes to bring together the statistics for their area. Now users can get the information on diskette.

So, the Statistical Reports Division had many accomplishments during the 1950's and 1960's that I give credit to the staff for, including the beginning of a formal Census Bureau history program. Before that, the work on census history was sporadic–largely compiling some sort of history for the decennial census and the economic census. But that is not the same thing as a continuing history of the Census Bureau census programs. So, what the Bureau's History Staff is doing now is much more than had ever been done before, and it is a much more stable program than the intermittent program it once used to be. The kind of work the History Staff is doing now would not have been done before because that kind of work would not have been associated with a specific piece of history that would have gotten some attention.

In 1967, I was called back to the House of Representatives to be the staff director again to develop and help pass legislation authorizing a mid-decade census of population and housing of the United States. There had been a lot of complaining over the years about how the Census Bureau obtains economic statistics every 5 years, but counted the number of inhabitants only every 10 years. There was some kind of unbalance there, and so the House of Representative's Committee on Post Office and Civil Service (of which the subcommittee was a part) wanted somebody who had experience and who could develop the legislation and steer it through the House of Representatives.

I wrote the bill, conducted hearings on it, and developed support for passage; in short, I was actually the floor manager of the bill. At that time, the Chairman of the Committee was Bill Green of Philadelphia, who was brand new and did not know as much about the ways of Congress as I did. Therefore, he asked me if I would be the floor manager for the bill rather than he, and I did. I sat in the chair of the majority whip on the floor of the House of Representatives, which you are not supposed to do, but if nobody objects, you do it.

Unfortunately, at that time, the Senate was not able to take up the bill and pass it. The Chairman of the corresponding Senate Committee was Senator Monroney. He was running for reelection at the time, and his opponent was criticizing him for being a spendthrift. Monroney said to me: "I am in favor of the bill. There is no question that it is going to be enacted, but I cannot afford to put it through now because it would just add ammunition for my opponent. When I come back to Congress after the election, we will pick up the bill and pass it." But he did not come back, and it took some years, in fact, before the legislative was passed and signed into law. The Census Bureau has not taken any mid-decade censuses, however, because the Congress has not appropriated money to conduct it. What I would like to see happen is that that legislation provide the basis for what was once called a major mid-decade statistical effort–not necessarily a complete census with all the bells and whistles and costs billions of dollars, but something more than what the Current Population Survey and the Bureau's population estimating activities. The decennial census figures become outdated over a span of 10 years. What the Bureau has talked about in the past is a one-time, within-each-decade expansion of the Current Population survey–the same kind of approach but a much larger sample capable of giving, if not small-area statistics, then larger-area statistics below the national level. Well, we will see.

My two terms on Capital Hill were, of course, interesting. It is a different world, a broadening experience, and I think it was beneficial to the Census Bureau. The Congress has been criticized by taxpayers for vast increases in staffing and building more office buildings to house the increased staff, not just for the Executive Branch of the Government. Actually, the Executive Branch has a bigger staff than it gets charged with because it borrows people from Federal agencies. I was working for the House of Representatives both times on nonreimbursable detail, which meant that the Census Bureau was still paying my salary.

When I first went to work in the House of Representatives, I had to undergo a learning experience in reverse; that is, I had to educate the Representatives who were new members of the subcommittee on what it should be. The new members asked the Census Bureau to provide a staff director because the only thing they knew about Government statistics was that there was an organization called the Census Bureau. I do not think they knew much more than that; so, the Census Bureau became the designated Federal agency to provide them with help. Now, however, that no longer is true. Tom Sawyer, as you may know, is the current Chairperson of that subcommittee. He is a knowledgeable person, and no longer is it surprising to find that there are some Representatives who have an interest in statistical matters–not only the decennial census, which is a matter of some particular interest to the House of Representatives, but more generally. Janet Norwood finds she can talk to congressional committees and at least some of them understand what she is talking about.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics and other Federal agencies also are no longer so shy about providing statistical information to the Congress, and they find that Members of Congress do not shy away from statistics as much as they used to. At one time, you could not talk to most of them about money to be spent on surveys. They would think that would be a waste of money; that was something that university people play around with. I can remember the Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Appropriations that dealt with the Census Bureau saying to the Director of the Census Bureau: “I do not see why you have a line in your budget for research. I do not see why the Census Bureau should be in the business of spending money on research.” Of course, what the Bureau meant was internal research to do its job better; even so, the Chairperson was dubious about anything that was called research. That is not quite so any longer; at least we now have a subcommittee that has a track record. It has been in existence now for over 30 years, and it is going to stay in existence.

The Senate’s Committee on Governmental Affaires and its Subcommittee on Government Information and Regulation, is equivalent to the House of Representative’s Committee that deals with Census Bureau matters. The Senate’s Committee and Subcommittee is somewhat differently oriented than the ones in the House of Representatives in that the Senate is directed more toward Government operations. I think statistical activities in the Federal Government, and the Census Bureau in particular, get more attention from the Congress now, for better or for

worse, than during the period when those things were treated with, at best, benign neglect.

There once used to be a full committee in the House of Representatives which reflected the House of Representative's built-in interest in the 10-year census as the producer of apportionment information. When legislation came along in those days that had to do with the Census Bureau, it would be handled by that Committee. In the post-World War II period, however, the Monroney-Mansfield streamlining of the Congress tried to eliminate relatively inactive committees. The House of Representatives Census Committee was eliminated, and somehow that function got handed over to that body's Post Office and Civil Service Committee, which in 1959 established a subcommittee to exercise the oversight function.

There is an interesting political story about how that happened. Those were the days when there still was a Federal Government Post Office Department. Postal matters were very important matters to the Congress, and being on the Committee that had oversight responsibility for the Post Office Department was a very desirable post for a Representative. A member of that Committee, especially one who would serve on one of the postal subcommittees, would get a lot of financial support from the postal unions and the mailing organizations. It was a very desirable place to be. Congress gave a lot of attention to postal matters and, of course, to civil service matters too. Therefore, this was a Committee that many Members of Congress wanted to be on. It gave them important things to do and gave them lots of financial support when they were running for reelection.

There was a vacancy at the beginning of that Congress for the Chairmanship seat of the Postal Operations Subcommittee. The next in line in terms of seniority was a Representative who was not considered by the leadership of the Committee to be well qualified to head up that important subcommittee. Ranking just below him in seniority was a Representative who was thought to be more competent and more deserving. In discussion about how to resolve the dilemma, someone thought of checking the Committee's charter that would permit the House of Representatives to to create another subcommittee. The statistical oversight function presented itself, and the Representatives with the most seniority was given the chair of the new subcommittee, clearing the way for the Representative (a woman) to chair the postal operations panel.

When the new subcommittee was established, it was realized that not only its chairman, but also the other members, had no knowledge of what the subcommit-

tee should do. The full Committee had no staff persons who had any expertise in that area; therefore, a request was made to the Census Bureau to lend one of its senior staff persons to indoctrinate the subcommittee. I had already served in a similar capacity for the Census Bureau's advisory committees, so I was chosen.

Bohme: **Aside from yourself, looking back over the history, for example, the revolving-door situation in which Census people go to the Office of Management and Budget and its people come to Census, was there anything like this with the subcommittee?**

Goldfield: Yes, but not a revolving door in a sense of congressional employees coming to work for the Census Bureau. Everything was one way as far as the Congress was concerned, but it was considered to be a broadening experience that would be useful even after an Federal employee came back to the Bureau. There was a whole succession of people who worked on Capital Hill, like Carlyle Van Aken, Art Young, Lou Greenberg, Tom Corcoran, and Doug Fahey, who served an overlapping term with me. The idea was that it would be helpful to the subcommittee, which, in turn, would be grateful to the Census Bureau and improve working relations. It would be generally useful to the public by helping the subcommittee to do good things, and the person who occupied that position would come back to the Census Bureau with a somewhat broader perspective on things.

Bohme: **Were all of these people on detail?**

Goldfield: Yes, until the Commerce Department made the Bureau stop that practice.

Although the creation of the subcommittee was not really an expression of great appreciation of the importance of congressional oversight of statistics, I think it turned out to be a very serendipitous thing. The House of Representatives Committee feels that it should have a subcommittee, and that it should support it, even to the extent of paying out of its own funds for a staff director and an assistant professional staff member too. As you know, the Committee has been active in connection with the 1990 census, not on a basis of being vindictive but on a basis of being cooperative. I think that mostly every chairperson of the subcommittee, including the present chairperson (Representative Sawyer) has taken the attitude that "we are here to help make the decennial census the best possible census it can be, help the Census Bureau with its other programs, and help Federal statistics generally. If the subcommittee holds hearings, it is not for the purpose of prosecution; it is to find out how the subcommittee can best help." I think that has been a sincere attitude; it provides a forum and an opportunity for people to let off steam

and sometimes accomplish constructive things. I am sure that endorsement by our subcommittee has some influence on the appropriations subcommittee.

Now, I guess I do not want to spend to much more time on me, even though I am really going through an “I am a camera” kind of approach to this.

At the time I became an assistant director, that title was equivalent to what is now is associate director. Like other agencies, the Census Bureau engages in semantic upgrading too. Although there were not associate directors then, there were assistant directors. They have been converted over to associate directors, and now there are positions called assistant directors under associate directors. That was not the case when I first became assistant director. At the time, the top executive staff at the Census Bureau consisted of the director, the deputy director, and five assistant directors who held executive staff meetings. Later, I was called upon to become the Chief of the newly reorganized International Statistical Programs Center. I worked at the Census Bureau in that capacity from 1971 to 1975.

As I said earlier, I did engage in some international activities before, but only as in my capacity as an expert on certain subjects. I used to be called upon to address the foreign trainees who were working at the Census Bureau on various subjects that I could talk to them about; but this was the first time that I became responsible for what was being called the International Statistical Programs Center. Then, it included not only what is now called the International Statistical Programs Center but also what is now the separate Center for International Research. It was all one large organization, considerably larger than it is now. Ben Gura, who had been the Assistant Director for International Programs, was appointed as my deputy.

He and I considered this to be a rather high-level activity at the time. It was an interesting period too, dealing with Dr. Ravenholt, the head of the Office of Population at the Agency for International Development, and the people at the United Nations. I should say that part of my prior international experience was that I was a delegate for the United States to the meetings of the United Nations Statistical Commission. In 1972 and 1974, I was the United States representative at these international conclaves, each of which ran for 2 weeks of actual meetings. Later, I was offered the job of head of the United Nations Statistical Office, which I turned down along with quite a few other jobs.

I could talk for quite a while on the good jobs that I turned down too, which is a measure, I think, of my loyalty to the Census Bureau and my feeling of the impor-

tance of all the many things that I had the opportunity to do there and since I left it for the National Academy of Sciences. I was able to turn down some other jobs, such as becoming head of the Statistical Policy Office of the Office of Management and Budget, and as Executive Director of the American Statistical Association.

Bohme: **When you were the head of International Statistics Program Center, did this include the Foreign Demographic Analysis Division located in Washington, DC, which studied the Russian and Chinese populations and generally was not spoken of with any amount of great publicity?**

Goldfield: No. At about that time, the Foreign Demographic Analysis Division was being transferred from the Bureau of the Census to the Bureau of Economic Analysis. This was part of the reshuffling that accompanied the establishing of the Social and Economic Statistics Administration as an umbrella organization over the Census Bureau and the Office of Business Economics (which was retitled the Bureau of Economic Analysis). The changes emphasized that in each department data collection and data processing should be separate from analysis and policy determination. In the Commerce Department, the Census Bureau was identified as the central agency for data collection and data processing, and the retitled Bureau of Economic Analysis as the focal agency for analysis. Another unit that was transferred from Census to the Bureau of Economic Analysis at that time was the Statistical Indicators Division, which had been in my domain when I was Assistant Director for Program Development. The Social and Economic Statistics Administration, which was disestablished a few years later, is not to be confused with the current Department of Commerce's Economic and Statistics Administration, although the structures are somewhat similar.

By the way, when the Foreign Demographic Analysis Division was first set up, around 1950, as the International Population Statistics Section in the Population and Housing Division, Ross Eckler asked me if I would be the head of that. I said: "Thank you, but I really would not want to be in charge of an operation that is being supported and being run for the Central Intelligence Agency and has to work under conditions of secrecy." I am not saying we should not have a Central Intelligence Agency affiliation; but, I said: "Ross, you can order me to take it and I will do my best; but, if you do not want to order me to take it, the answer would be that I prefer not to. There is a young man in the Population and Housing Division; he is kind of stuck at the level he is in right now. He is working for a distinguished demographer, Henry Sheldon, and Henry is going to be in that job for a

while. I would like you to consider him for that job; he is Norman Lawrence." So Ross, who was always a very gracious gentleman, said: "I am not going to force you to take the job. I do not know much about Norman Lawrence, but at your suggestion I will check him out." He called me back a week or so later and said: "I checked out on Norman Lawrence and you are right. He looks as though he is a very promising young demographer who might make a contribution to this new venture, but he hasn't had any experience in running a thing like this. This is kind of critical because of this special arrangement. I am going to offer the job to [W.] Parker Mauldin." This was a surprise to me, not that I did not think very highly of Parker Mauldin, but I did not really recognize him as a demographer at the time. (More recently, he has been with the Population Council in New York.) Ross said: "But I will offer the job of assistant to Norman Lawrence and let us see if your recommendation pans out." Well, it panned out very well, and Norman later succeeded Parker as head of that activity. I thought of Parker more of a psychologist who was at the Census Bureau because he was an expert in survey response research; but, he turned out to have the background and the know-how to become one of our more distinguished demographers.

As I said earlier, I left the Census Bureau permanently in 1975, after 35 years of Federal service, to work for the Committee on National Statistics at the National Academy of Sciences. During my employment at the Bureau, I served under eight directors, not counting acting directors like Phil Hauser and Bob Hagan. I served under William Lane Austin, who was the director of the Bureau from 1933 until 1941; James Clyde Capt, 1941 to 1949; Roy V. Peel, 1950 to 1953; Robert W. Burgess, 1953 to 1961; Richard M. Scammon, 1961 to 1965; A. Ross Eckler, 1965 to 1969; George Hay Brown, 1969 to 1973; and Vincent P. Barabba during his first term as Director from 1973 to 1976. I had occasion to see a variety of styles of directorships during that time–most of them I would say successful, all of them I would say at least partly successful.

Bohme: **Ed, you mentioned a whole series of eight directors under whom you worked. You probably did not have all that much direct contact with the earliest ones, but I certainly would appreciate it if you would talk about those with whom you did. Give me your impressions–some of the things that you did with them or on their behalf.**

Goldfield: The position of Director of the Census Bureau, as you know, is political; the Director is appointed by the President. Unlike, for example, the Commissioner of Labor Statistics, who receives a commission for a specific term of 4 years not to coincide

with that of the President, to make it somewhat apolitical, the Director of the Census Bureau is appointed by each new President and serves at his pleasure. On one or two occasions, the Director also has left at the pleasure of the President, so it is a little more political than the positions of heads of some of the other statistical agencies, some of which are not Presidential appointments.

The "political"–and I use that word in quotes–aspect of it can be an advantage. A Presidential appointee in some respects has more clout within the administration and with the Congress than a mere civil servant. Some of the Directors have been more identifiable as political appointees than others. An outstanding example to the contrary is Ross Eckler, who spent most of his professional career in the Census Bureau. In fact, he arrived before I did and worked his way up to the position of Director. He was not appointed because he was of the right party, certainly not because he had been active in the presidential campaign or anything like that. He was appointed because he was the most technically qualified person to fill that job at that time.

On the other hand, appointees like J.C. Capt [1941-1949] and Richard Scammon [1961-1965], to cite two examples, were appointed more because of their political activities and affiliations than because they were highly experienced Census-type statisticians. That is not to say that they were incapable of doing the job. In fact, I have particular admiration for both Capt and Scammon as good, effective directors. They knew how to operate as the outside person for the Bureau.

I remember when Richard Scammon came in. I had already known him, and he already knew me before that; so, I almost immediately was pressed into service as a sort of an indoctrinator for him. I worked with him quite closely all the time he was Director. One of the first things he said to me was: "I have no qualms about my ability to be Director because I know the Census Bureau has a very good staff and people know how to do their jobs. My job is not to do their jobs; my job is to represent the Bureau and its feelings with the Congress, with the administration, and with the public." He did that very well. I do not mean that he was not a statistician. The reason I knew him before that was that he was–and still is–this country's best-known electoral statistician; however, that was not a subject that had much to do with the regular work at the Census Bureau.

Roy V. Peel [1950-1953], although he came from a university and was a professor of (as I recall) political science, was chosen because of his political affiliation. He, too, regarded himself as primarily an outside operator. In fact, we did not see

a lot of him because he did so much traveling. I recall Helen White, who was his chief factotum, saying to me that Dr. Peel had told her that when anybody writes or calls to ask him to make an appearance somewhere, do not turn any of them down. Accept everything, and he would sort them out later and decide which ones he could go to and which ones were of pressing import. He accepted all that he possibly could. When he would go on a trip, he would come back and give us a report on regional beers. That was part of his "research."

All of these directors were good in the way in which they could best apply their experience and knowledge and talents. All of them, I think, had affection for the Census Bureau and some appreciation of its value. Scammon, I think, remains in my mind as an excellent example of somebody who knew how to represent the Census Bureau at the highest levels. He had access to the President. He told me that after the Kennedy campaign, in which he was active as a political adviser, he was offered a number of different high-level jobs in the Government and he chose that of Director of the Census Bureau. After he did so and he was in the job for a while, he realized what a good choice he had made; he found the people who took some of the other jobs with the military and the Department of State were living crisis lives. They got calls in the middle of the night; they had to go off on short-notice emergency trips. His life as Director of the Census Bureau was relatively tranquil.

Somehow, if the Bureau could be endowed with a Director who was like, say, Scammon and Eckler put together, it would have everything. It's hardly a likely combination. When Ross Eckler was Director, we all had great affection for him because he was one of us. That is not to say that he was a man without dignity and bearing; so he was. But he knew us all; we were all on a first-name basis with him. He knew our work, he knew what things we could do well and what things we could not. As any Director, he got summoned to congressional hearings, had to deal with his superiors at the Department of Commerce, with Office of Management and Budget staff, but Ross, of course, was able to be more of an inside man than any of the others who served there. I believe, of those, Austin, Capt, and Eckler had been in the Census Bureau before they became Directors. Capt, as I recall, had a position in connection with the 1940 Census of Population and Housing which was, in effect, the director of patronage. Of course, it did not have that title. In those days, there was a lot more patronage involved in the decennial cen-

sus than there is now. That was one of the reasons why it was then considered rather important for the Director to be politically attuned.

I had my first direct contact with Ross Eckler when I worked in my first professional capacity at the Bureau, which started several months after I arrived. As I stated earlier, at first I was a clerical processing supervisor, but then I moved in November 1940 to a professional position in the Employment and Income Statistics Branch of the Population Division. Chief of that branch was Ross Eckler, so I sort of followed along after him through much of my career in the Census Bureau.

George Hay Brown [1969-1973] succeeded Eckler with the change in administration when Nixon was elected President. However, in no way do I remember Brown's selection as Director of the Bureau to be political. Before becoming Bureau Director, Brown was Director of marketing research at Ford Motor Company and also taught statistics. He regarded himself–and probably rightly so–as a competent statistician and economist. I remember saying to him: "Let's get so-and-so to help you work on this matter that has to do with economic statistics"; he responded in his somewhat stiff manner, "I am my own economist." Again, I had some responsibility for indoctrinating him. Eckler stayed around for a while as a consultant to assist, but I was the person who had to attend to the details.

When Brown came to the Bureau, he found that there was going to be a big Department of Commerce sponsored conference at which he would be required to present a major address. The first 3 weeks or so that he was here, I was working with him literally day and night preparing statistical displays for him to use in his address. He was very demanding on that sort of thing.

Bohme: **Did you also write his speech for him?**

Goldfield: I only provided pieces for it. I do not think he ever gave anybody ultimate responsibilities to write a speech for him. He would assign work; in fact, he wore me out. I would bring in a chart that we had done a lot of work on and he wanted to put in his handout. He would look it over and say: "Let's do this differently"; after we had done this 10 times–all in a great rush, you know–it was kind of wearing. He was quite a perfectionist on things like that.

I was going to say I was taken aback on my first conversations with him when I said: "I suppose you know something about Census statistics from your experience with working with the Board [Ford Motor Co.'s Board of Directors]." He said: "No, we never used any Census statistics; we just looked at the market. I

could give you statistics on how many cars General Motors produced with center posts and without center posts. That is the kind of statistics we needed." Even after he had been at the Bureau for 4 years, he did not know as much about the inner workings of the Census Bureau as Ross Eckler, but then who would?

But each of them in his way was, as I say, conscientious and reasonably effective. Some of them–Robert Burgess comes to mind as an outstanding example, and Roy Peel, allowed themselves to be convinced that they were doing so well in their job that they would survive a change in administration. I gave myself the rather unpleasant duty of telling them that the history of the Census Bureau was that Directors never survived a change in administration; I am afraid that is still so with the exception of Vince Barabba [1973-1976 and 1979-1981]. Burgess served a full 8 years of Republican administration after he had already retired from the Western Electric Company, having reached the age of 65. By the time he had finished his 8 years, he was already 73 or 74. Yet, he had in his mind that he was such an excellent person and so successful as Census Bureau Director that surely the next administration would want to keep him. So,every 4, 6, or 8 years, I would have the visual impression of a Director of the Census Bureau being carried out in his swivel chair. That never happened. I am not too sure that the Census Bureau would not be better off if its directorship were modeled after that of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. That agency was consciously established to be as apart from politics as possible, because labor statistics are considered very sensitive.

After our Committee on National Statistics had studied and evaluated the National Center for Education Statistics, we put out a very critical report. In effect, we said that what we were looking at did not really exist as a qualified center. We made recommendations about how it could be made better. That led to legislation being enacted in which the specifications for the directorship of that agency were modeled after those of the Commissioner of Labor Statistics, not of the Census Bureau Director, despite the fact that the study panel was conducted with Vince Barabba as its chairman and Danny Levine [Census Bureau Deputy Director, 1979-1982] as the study director. We chose Vince and Danny because the Department of Education said: "We want people heading that study who had experience in successfully running a good statistical agency." I said: "I think I know the right people." Nevertheless, what was held up as the model for the status of the director was the Bureau of Labor Statistics, not the Census Bureau.

Now, as I said, the Bureau of Labor Statistics' statistical work is considered to be more politically sensitive than that of the Census Bureau. The fact, however, is that the work of the two agencies overlaps. The Census Bureau runs the Current Population Survey, which produces the monthly figures on employment and unemployment. The Bureau of Labor Statistics then analyzes the data and releases the information to the public. The Census Bureau does similar work for the Consumer Price Index.

There are other things that the Census Bureau does that are politically sensitive, like obtaining data on housing starts, retail sales. So, I think the same consideration could apply to that kind of information. Personally I would like to see such a change made. I recognize that the closer the head of an agency is to the President the more clout that person has; that could be effectively used to the betterment of the Census Bureau. We had some people, like J.C. Capt and Richard Scammon, and to some extent, Roy Peel, who had that kind of entree and used it.

When Capt became Director, we were a little concerned. His previous experience with the Census Bureau had mostly to do with patronage; that would not be the right frame of mind for serving as the Director of the Bureau. However, he took his job very seriously. He used to leave his office and walk around the corridors day by day to see if everybody was working. I remember one incident in which he was walking down the corridor, which was filled with files, and found an employee lying on top of one of the files sound asleep. He shook him awake and said: "You are fired!" The employee said: "You can not fire me; I do not work for the Bureau of the Census; I work for the Public Buildings Administration, [predecessor to the General Services Administration]." It was very frustrating to Capt, but that was an example of how seriously he took his job.

Barabba is an example of somebody who, it might be said, was first appointed because of his political connections, having been the head of a research and polling organization that served the Republican Party. Obviously, however, he came to his job with some experience. He knew about survey taking; he knew about some aspects of using statistics for making policy decisions. He took this job very seriously, so much so that he ended up serving two separate terms under two politically different administrations–despite the fact that when he was first appointed, the American Statistical Association, which usually is not an organization that intervenes in such matters, testified against him in his confirmation hearings. I remonstrated with my friends in the leadership of the American Statistical

Association at that time. I told them I already knew Barabba; he had been a member of the Bureau's American Marketing Association Advisory Committee, and that I knew a little bit about him personally. I said: "You are taking an elitist position. You are saying that because Vincent Barabba is not a Ph. D., a professor of theoretical statistics, he is not qualified to be the Director of the Bureau of the Census. That is a lot of nonsense. He is going to turn out to be a good Director if you will just not damage him too much by your opposition." That turned out to be so true that the American Statistical Association has been profusely apologetic ever since.

As I did with some previous Directors, I signed him up to be a member of the American Statistical Association. Barabba was elected a fellow; he became a vice president; and he was elected president of the American Statistical Association. He had all honors of that association bestowed upon him deservedly; but, he was quite a change from George Hay Brown.

George Hay Brown was somewhat of a stuffed shirt. When he moved into the Director's office, he put his desk at the extreme far end of that large office, and he had his secretary sitting at her desk, right in front of his office. You had to get past the secretary to see him. If you did get in, usually because he had summoned you, you would find him all dressed up in his suit and white shirt, sitting back at his desk there. You would sit in a seat by it and confer with him, and eventually he would dismiss you. This is not to say that he was not cordial, but that was just his manner.

He was succeeded by Vince Barabba. The first day Vince was in his office, he sent for me; I could see immediately that things were going to be different. The secretary's desk was now no longer in front of the the Director's door. The door was open; he was sitting at a little table up near the door, with his jacket off, sleeves rolled up, his collar unbuttoned, and his feet up on the table. Vince was quite a different kind of person. Of course, he was much younger than his predecessors; but, he is not that young now and he still is Vince Barabba.

George Hay Brown was pale in that respect alongside Robert Burgess [1953-1961]. Burgess came from a distinguished New England family. His brother was a distinguished official at a high level of the Federal Government at one time. Tracing the family history way back, many had served their State and country governments. He was a man of intense dignity; hardly anyone called him "Bob." I addressed him as "Dr. Burgess," and he addressed other people the same

way. I wanted just to illustrate that. Morris Hansen, as you know, did not have a Ph.D. in statistics. When he came to Washington, DC, all he had was a bachelor's degree from the University of Wyoming; later he got a master's degree from American University. This distressed Dr. Burgess a good deal; he thought that there was something wrong with somebody who had already achieved that high a level in the Census Bureau without having a Ph.D. Burgess was a Ph.D. in mathematics, as I recall. Somewhere during Burgess's term, Morris got a honorary Ph.D., I think from his home university; thereafter, Dr. Burgess addressed him as "Dr. Hansen," much to Hansen's dismay.

Burgess not only had an imposing mien, but he had an imposing appearance. He was tall, gray haired, erect stature; he was already, I think, 66 when he became the Director. He moved with great dignity.

Scammon was and still is more like Barabba. He is open and friendly. Aside from being quite wide, he is quite tall too. When he met Burgess, Burgess was in the process of leaving as Director and Scammon was in the process of becoming Director. Burgess made sure to make some mention in the discussion of his great family history and looked at Scammon as if Scammon was "just off the boat." Scammon had come from Minnesota–from the Midwest. Later, when Scammon was telling me the story, he said that he was sure that Burgess had the impression that Scammon–or whatever his name was (and he thought Burgess did not really know his name)–was a representative of poorer classes. So Scammon found some opportunity to mention that he came from the Scammon family (which has its roots in New England) that went back longer than the Burgess family. You can imagine the look of dismay on Burgess's face.

Bohme: **This may be a digression for you, and perhaps you did not have to much exposure to it, but I remember that you referred to the patronage system–generally known around here as the referral system. Did you have any observations of this system in action?**

Goldfield: Oh my, yes, lots of them. I am sorry you brought that up. The patronage–generally referred to as referral–system is no longer as much as a system as it used to be. Past censuses traditionally had been taken by house-to-house canvass. A veritable army of enumerators, including supervisors, all over the country did all the work. The Census Bureau did not take the decennial census by mail then. If you go far enough back, they even took the agricultural and economic censuses by door-to-door canvass. That was labor-intensive, and it required the Bureau to hire many additional

employees. Some of these censuses were taken in poor economic times, which was good for the census in a way as it provided more of an available labor force. I used to say the best way to plan for the next census is to plan for it to be taken during a depression. Of course, the Bureau still hires a lot of people to work on the 10-year census; but, it is not as labor-intensive in that respect as it used to be. At least, some of the labor has been transferred to letter carriers and the respondents themselves. The system at its worst gave the Census Bureau some incompetent people–i.e., people who took the jobs thinking it was just another political favor. Others looked for an opportunity to work hard, not only at the enumerator level, but at the upper levels too; so, it had some advantages. As in the operations today, Census is trying to diminish the disadvantages and retain some of the advantages.

When I was staff director in the House of Representatives Subcommittee on Census and Statistics, there was much debate on this matter of patronage in the Census. By that time, it had gotten to the point where the Republicans and Democrats were almost trying to "wish that responsibility" on each other because the more the Census Bureau demanded honest work, the less grateful the appointees to these jobs were to their respective Representatives or other political leaders who had helped them to get the job.

I forget which census it was–it might have been the 1950 Censuses of Population and Housing–that I was the program coordinator of, or it might have been the 1960 census. I was summoned into the office of Representative Broyhill of Virginia. This was during the time the census field work was going on, and it turned out that he called me into his office to berate me, since I represented the Bureau on Capital Hill. He said: "I gave you a lot of names of people to appoint to jobs in the census. You appointed some of them, and those are the ones I am hearing complaints from. They are worked too hard and paid too little; so, I am not getting any political credit for this." This happened to other Representatives and other party leaders, ward leaders, and all the others who participated in one way or another in the process. As a result, I found myself participating in the debates among the members of the Subcommittee and the full Committee on Capital Hill as to what they could do to diminish the role of political referral in the census. It was getting to be a thankless responsibility for them and for their political affiliates. That attitude, I think, probably still persists to this day. I no longer see, in the case of the last couple of censuses which I am looking at from a different viewpoint, that there is much squabbling for patronage privileges.

If you play it right, however, there are some advantages to the referral process. I will give an example. I remember visiting a supervisor's office in Queens, New York, during one of those censuses. New York, as usual, was a "disaster area" for the census. We were brought up there from Washington, DC, to get the feel of this, to see if we could get things straightened out. I found in that office the supervisor, a relatively young man who was a lawyer by profession, working very diligently and to the very best of his ability. He had set aside his law practice in order to take this temporary job, which paid him less that he was getting at his law practice and was much more nerve wracking. I said to him: "Why are you doing this?" He said: "Like so many lawyers, I have political aspirations. Someday, I would like to run for political office–maybe a congressman, maybe end up a Federal judge–the usual aspirations of some lawyers now. This is my first step on the political ladder. If I do not do it well, then I am not getting off to a good start on my ambition; so, I am going to do it the best that I can." Well, with that kind of motivation, you can find people like that who will do a good job.

Just to cite another example, I remember recruiting people for a special census of a particular city. The first thing I did was to hire the mayor's wife to be an office-worker. That immediately got me an office in city hall next to the mayor, and it got me in tune with all the people I needed in the city administration. The wife did not want her husband to be ashamed of her, and her husband was motivated to have a good census taken. There are many such examples. There is this matter of motivation and good politicians. There are good politicians who do have some feeling of responsibility, especially when it comes to something they perceive as being beneficial to their city, county, town, or whatever. They can do a better job than somebody you just hired off the street.

So, the right combination, I think, is to use the referral system to get to people you would not otherwise get to. These are not people standing in line in front of unemployment offices. The Bureau, however, must require that everybody you hire has the necessary basic qualifications for the job. Do not hire someone who is illiterate just because he is the nephew of the Congressman, but do not fail to hire a qualified person because he is the nephew of the Congressman.

You asked for anecdotes about Directors. Let me put in one about Phil Hauser, who was a one-time Acting Director [August 1949 to March 1950]. When I came to the Census Bureau in 1940, Phil was a relatively new Assistant Division Chief in the Population Division under the distinguished Dr. Truesdell. Phil went from

that position to Assistant Director of the Census Bureau. We used to josh him about how he never was a chief; he always was an assistant. In many respects, however, he was one of the most professionally and talented persons the Bureau ever had. His real career was being professor at the University of Chicago. He was an eminent demographer, sociologist, statistician, and economist. He was president of several different professional societies and very active in international affairs. He is still around, but regrettably he is so elderly now and suffering from poor eyesight that he is not able to do much work any longer; he was active, however, until fairly recently. I remember one instance which took place after J.C. Capt was required to leave his job because of the illness that eventually proved fatal. Phil Hauser was asked to return to the Census Bureau as Acting Director, pending the appointment of a permanent Director. Even though he had been away from the Bureau for a time, as I recall, he had the responsibility of appearing before the appropriations subcommittees in the House of Representatives and the Senate to defend the Census Bureau's budget for that coming year [1950].

The big hurdle in the whole appropriation process is appearing before the House of Representatives appropriations subcommittee that has responsibility for your department. The House of Representatives appropriations subcommittee that covered the other Federal departments in addition to the Department of Commerce, were, as I recall, the Department of State, the Department of Justice, and the Federal Judiciary. That Subcommittee was headed by the irascible John Rooney for many years. He had been accustomed to dealing with Directors like J.C. Capt. The accustomed procedure was that Representative Rooney would say–at the appropriate time in the hearings and after having vented his spleen on the Secretary of Commerce and others–"Now we come to the Bureau of the Census, and now we have Mr. J.C. Capt, Director of the Census Bureau, and members of his staff. Mr. Capt, here is our first question." The first question would be asked, and Mr. Capt would say: "I think so-and-so on my staff can answer that"; they would go on like this maybe for hours, with Capt passing the questions along to the appropriate staff person who could answer the questions. At the conclusion, Representative Rooney would say: "Thank you very much, Mr. Capt. We now go on to the next bureau."

When Hauser appeared before the House of Representative Subcommittee, he would answer all the questions himself in a knowledgeable manner. I was sitting with the Census Bureau people unnecessarily backing up Phil Hauser at that time.

At the end of the hearing, Representative Rooney stood up in front of his seat and looked down at Hauser and asked: “Mr. Hauser” (of course, he would not call him Dr. Hauser), “you are a college professor, aren’t you?” Dr. Hauser responded: “Yes, I am.” Representative Rooney said: “I do not think much of college professors, and I understand you are the Acting Director and therefore just here temporarily; so, I may not be dealing with you again. However, I just want to say for the record that I have never been more impressed with the head of any bureau being able to answer all the questions. I commend you for it,” or some words to that effect. It was an unusual kind of compliment coming from Representative Rooney, but well deserved.

Bohme: **Did you want to talk about the National Academy of Sciences?**

Goldfield: Yes, I would love to. I might say that [my association with the National Academy of Sciences] began with my retirement from the Bureau of the Census, which took place when I reached the minimum age, and I had more than enough years of service. By the time of my retirement, I had been with the Bureau for 35 years, but it by no means meant severing the relationship with the Bureau. It was really a move to another position in which I could serve the Bureau of the Census.

There was hardly any interval between one job and the other. I left the Bureau at the close of business one Friday and started the job at the National Academy of Sciences on the next Monday morning. So, you might say my real retirement consisted of one weekend. I have been working there ever since June 1975; so, I have been in this new phase of my career for 16-1/2 years now. My job with the Academy was, and still is, with the staff of the then relatively new Committee on National Statistics . This committee was charged with handling statistical studies within the National Academy of Sciences.

Let me branch off a moment to explain to anybody who might be interested in this later, who does not know any more about the National Academy of Sciences than I did when I was first approached by it. It is not part of the Federal Government. It was started by an congressional legislation in 1863 and signed into law by Abraham Lincoln to serve the Federal Government and make objective, independent, authoritative studies on scientific issues. It has been doing that ever since. It has grown to become a very large organization, which at any one time is doing scores of different studies for various agencies of the Federal Government. It is intended to be outside the Government so it can be objective and nonpolitical, not dependent on Congress for its appropriations. That means the National

Academy of Sciences has to constantly scramble for money, but at least it preserves the Academy's independence for the most part. So, as it happened, the first project I worked on for the committee was commissioned by the Census Bureau. In fact, Vince Barabba, who was the Census Bureau Director at the time, said the only reason he would approve my retirement from the Bureau was because I would be going to the National Academy of Sciences to work on a study that the Bureau needed and that he had personally developed. It was a study that produced a report on privacy and confidentiality as factors in survey response. One of the reasons that the Bureau needed such a study was that it was then engaged in controversial matters about whether census records should be confidential or not.

So, I was recruited by the Academy and encouraged [to take the job] by the Bureau's Director for that study. Before I even left the Bureau to take that job, I said to Barabba that I wanted to be sure that there was something in the record saying there would be no conflict of interest. On the surface, it did not look quite right for the Bureau to be sponsoring a study that was supposed to be objective and independent. So, I got a written legal opinion from the Department of Commerce's Office of the General Counsel that there was no conflict of interest because (1) I was not a party to the negotiation for that study and (2) I could be trusted to be independent. I was chosen because I was qualified to do this kind of work, and I did operate in a completely independent way, as we have ever since.

I went the National Academy of Sciences as Study Director for that particular project. This was when the committee had been in existence for only a couple of years and was really just getting under full steam. Margaret Martin (later to be, among other things, President of the American Statistical Association and herself a fairly recent retiree from the Federal Government) was the Executive Director–that is, the committee's Chief of Staff. It turned out, rather unbeknownst to me at the time, that what she had in mind was that after I had finished that study, I would succeed her as Executive Director.

So, I was the study director from mid-1975 to some date in 1978, and then I became the Executive Director of the committee from 1978 till 1987. Now, I am sort of retired; more exactly, I am sort of director emeritus. Since some date in the middle of 1987, my title has been "Senior Associate." The person who had been my chief lieutenant during all the years I had been Executive Director, Miron Straf, was my anointed successor, and did take over that committee. So, I am still there, happily working on various interesting things, including four studies for the

Census Bureau. Poor Miron is much more saddled with all of the administrative problems, such as personnel, budgeting, and things like that.

The Committee was established around the end of 1971 in response to a recommendation of the President's Commission on Federal Statistics, which has been appointed by President Nixon in 1970. In the fall of 1971, the Commission issued its two-volume report, which had a lot of observations about Federal statistical systems and recommendations. One group of the recommendations had to do with the Commission's feelings that there should be a continuing organization to do this kind of thing–to monitor the Federal statistical system–and to be available to make competent studies of particular issues involving Federal statistics. The Commission recommended that, in order to put it at the highest scientific level and in the greatest possible situation of independence, the committee should be located in the National Academy of Sciences. People sometimes say the National Academy of Sciences/National Research Council because officially the National Research Council is the name of the operating staff of the National Academy of Sciences.

Reports of presidential commissions usually end up collecting dust on the shelf. Here is a case of one commission that was very promptly acted upon before the year was out. The National Academy of Sciences acted on that recommendation and created a committee. There was some kind of informal promise that eventually there would be some financial support forthcoming. Although the committee got started with a startup fund from the Russell Sage Foundation to the National Academy of Sciences, it was not very much. It was kind of a shoestring operation when I arrived in 1975. The committee had begun one or two studies, but at least it was getting organized. It had a small staff, which is now larger.

We now have a staff of about 25 people and a committee made up of very distinguished statisticians who are university professors, researchers, or whatever, and who are tapped by the National Academy of Sciences to serve terms on the committee. The committee itself is sort of like a board of directors: the first committee chairman was William Kruskal of the University of Chicago. He was a member of the President's Commission, and several other committee members also had been commission members. Morris Hansen, who by then had already left the Census Bureau and joined the staff of Westat, was one of the first committee charter members. Kruskal later was elected president of the American Statistical Association. One time, I counted and found found that we had 10 members of the com-

mittee who had already been or were to be President of the American Statistical Association. Almost all of the members have been elected fellows of the American Statistical Association. Some are more distinguished as economists, sociologists, or demographers than as statisticians per se, but they are all highly competent statisticians. So we work with a board of very distinguished people who serve one term of 3 years or two terms totaling 6 years. Kruskal's successor as Chairman was Conrad Taeuber, whom you will recall as an Associate Director [for Demographic Fields] at the Census Bureau. The committee [of the National Academy of Sciences] does studies on important matters and puts out reports that get attention. Sometimes studies are congressionally mandated. Congress will actually pass a resolution urging that the study be conducted by the National Academy of Sciences or actually passes legislation to that effect. Once in a while, however, when that happens, the Academy has a reluctant sponsor. Of course, the Congress will never say: "We will pay for it." It says to a department or bureau: "We are commanding you to pay for it." The Academy has done quite a number of projects with the Census Bureau; it has been one of our chief clients. Of course, it is the biggest statistical agency, has the greatest variety of different subject areas, and, perhaps, the greatest variety of methodological issues.

If I went back far enough, I think that in the mid-1920's, the National Academy of Sciences panel undertook a study to determine the proper formula for reapportioning seats in the House of Representatives. This report's recommendation was enacted into law that has been in force ever since.

The first National Academy of Sciences' study that I had any acquaintance with was made by a special ad hoc committee before Academy's committee came into existence. It was appointed in 1969 to look at plans for the 1970 Census of Population and Housing, to observe its progress, and to issue a report. That 1972 report was called *America's Uncounted People*. So, you can see that the Academy of Sciences has been giving this issue of the 10-year census undercount some attention for over 20 years now. Morris Hansen was a member of that committee and was identified as a senior staff member of Westat. It set a precedent for some subsequent decennial studies.

I can count seven or eight major studies that we have produced and published that had to do directly with the Bureau of the Census, that were even directly sponsored by the Bureau or by the Department of the Commerce on behalf of the Bureau. One of them was cosponsored by the Law Enforcement Assistance Admin-

istration for us to examine the Census Bureau's crime survey. The Academy released a report called *Surveying Crime*, and then there was a report on the 1980 Census of Population and Housing called *Counting the People in 1980.* Also, there was a report that I worked on called *Privacy and Confidentiality as Factors in Survey Response*. During the course of this study, two surveys were designed, conducted, tabulated, and analyzed, and the results were included in the report– which is not the way the National Academy of Sciences usually works. It usually says: "Well, we bring together the most eminent people who are informed about this subject. All they have to do is discuss it, reach a consensus on each of the issues, and write a report." Of course, it is all in their heads. In this case, I did not believe that was quite the way to do it, although the committee did have quite a distinguished panel of experts on that study.

Another study that we have put out is *Estimating Population and Income of Small Areas*, which was directly sponsored by the Bureau of the Census. Then there is a study on planning the 1990 Census of Population and Housing; in fact, there have been two reports on that subject. We have had an interim report on the Survey of Income and Program Participation, and there will be another more detailed report coming out on that.

It may sound up until now as though the National Academy of Sciences was always dealing with the demographic side of the Census Bureau. This distressed me, but there was work on the economic side too. There are committee staff papers on service industries statistics, produced under Census Bureau sponsorship. I hope that before the end of January, the committee will have a good-sized report on foreign trade statistics, cosponsored by the Bureau of the Census (on behalf of its Foreign Trade Division), the Bureau of Economic Analysis, and the Customs Service.

A committee panel is beginning a study on poverty and family assistance that certainly involves the Census Bureau, and we are getting ready to start up two new Census 2000 panels, one of which is congressionally mandated. The Academy is planning to call the Bureau-sponsored one the Panel to Evaluate Alternative Census Methods, and the other, the Panel on Meeting the Needs for Census Data. Of course, the panels will coordinate with one another and with all the other groups that are being set up right now to look toward the next census.

So, you can see, I and my colleagues are still serving the Census Bureau. We are still keeping in close touch with the Bureau but also with all the other parts of the

Federal statistical system. There are many other studies that we have done that I have not mentioned because they are not Census Bureau related, although some of our studies, directed to other issues and sponsored by other agencies, are of interest to the Census Bureau. For example, I remember when we put out our report on productivity statistics. I addressed Shirley Kallek's staff [she was Associate Director for Economic Fields in the 1970's and early 1980's] on that, and we made sure that the Bureau's economic directorate was supplied with copies of the report. The Bureau knew that the statistics that it produced went into the measurement of productivity, even though it was someone else's responsibility to make those measures.

The committee's big study on treatment of incomplete data in surveys was so broadly based that I cannot say that any one agency was the sponsor. Certainly, the Census Bureau had a great interest in it. We work on cross-cutting issues too. Another example is the committee's report on sharing research data. Again, the Census Bureau shares with other agencies an interest in that. Our study on what we called (in rather "uppity" fashion) the Surveying Subjective Phenomena dealt with problems you encounter when you run surveys in which you ask subjective questions, and how accurate are the answers to that. You can define objective and subjective questions asked–objective questions being questions the answers to which can be verified by outside evidence. If you say what your age is, then somebody can verify that by looking at your birth certificate. Subjective questions are inquiries that cannot be so verified. If I asked whom you are going to vote for or what you think about a public issue, we would have to go inside your brain to verify it. Even then, that would not be definitive, because you may change your mind. So, that is another study that produced a two-volume report that the Census Bureau was interested in.

Another report was on cognitive aspects of survey methodology, which has some relation to the topic I just mentioned. It has to do with bringing together statisticians, survey practitioners, psychologists, and other scientists to address the issue of how you run surveys and get the information you really want. It is not just a matter of numbering the questions and putting them in little boxes. The whole interview situation–by "interview," I mean whether you are conducting it face to face, by mail, or by telephone–has issues (such as cost cutting) that are of interest not only to the whole Federal statistical system but also to the whole statistical universe.

If I may do a little bragging, one of the things I am especially pleased with is the number of Census Bureau alumni who have worked on the National Academy of Sciences' committee I have been discussing. Besides myself, the committee's staff has included Danny Levine, Bill Madow, Milt Eisen, Tom Jabine, Bob Warren, Sol Helfand, Meyer Zitter, Carolyn Rogers, Donnie Rothwell, Elmer Biles, Terry DiMaio, Ross Eckler, Dennis Johnston, Joe Steinberg, and Hal Nisselson. Now, what that represents is that I knew where to look to get good people when the committee needed somebody to do a particular job or to be a continuing member of the staff in any particular capacity. I knew that recent retirees from the Census Bureau would be confident, knowledgeable, trustworthy, and not too hard to bargain with about salary because they were already the recipients of Federal pensions. Many of the retirees remained in the Washington area; so, this has been a wonderful labor-force pool. Without exception, these individuals have done very good work for us. Of course, some Census alumni have also been distinguished members of the committee itself, like Morris Hansen, Conrad Taeuber, Leslie Kish, and Bernie Greenberg. There have been other Census alumni who served on various special panels too–Paul Biemer, Bob Parke, Barbara Bailar, Joe Waksberg, Vince Barabba, Lee Gilford, Bob Kahn, and Kathy Wallman. Bob Groves was a member of our panel before he joined the Census Bureau's staff. Two people who later joined the Census Bureau's after working with us are Dave O'Neill and Betsy Martin. Betsy, as you know, is still here [at the Bureau as Chief, Center for Survey Methods Research]. She worked on the subjective phenomena study.

It has been great for me to retire from the Census Bureau and have the privilege of continuing to work with the National Academy of Sciences for all these years while retaining my active interest in the affairs of the Census Bureau and the Federal statistical system. Therefore, I hardly feel as though I ever left the Bureau. During the time I was a regular employee but was off somewhere working for the Department of Defense, the Department of State, or the congressional subcommittee, I never felt that I left the Bureau. In fact, on those occasions I always had a "string" tied to the front doorknob of the Census Bureau with the other end "tied around my wrist." I do not expect to come back to the Bureau and knock on their door now and say "reemployment."

Bohme: **You told me once before that you were going to do an interview with Margaret Martin; did that ever happen?**

Goldfield: What did happen was that the magazine, *Statistical Science*, has as one of its running features interviews with eminent statisticians. One of the first features was on Morris Hansen; Ingram Olkin, who had been a Academy of Science committee member and is a *Statistical Science*, did that at least a couple of years ago. He gave me the transcript of it to review and correct because Morris was talking off the top of his head and did not necessarily have all the dates and other details exactly right. I diligently read it and corrected various statements and references. Quite recently, with Miron Straf sitting beside him, Olkin interviewed Margaret Martin and gave me the transcript of that. I had a very entertaining time reading it; this was just 2 or 3 weeks ago. One of our new secretaries transcribed the interview from the tape. She was completely unacquainted with the names of all the people that Margaret was talking about (some of whom went back to the 1930's and some of who are still living), and the agencies, institutions, organizations, and pieces of legislation. The secretary, however, tried to transcribe the interview as best she could. It appeared to me as though she was having a little trouble hearing what was on the tape, but the whole thing was so full of extravagant misspellings and misrepresentations that it was a challenge to me. I knew all the people Margaret was talking about, all the organizations, etc., but I had to stare at some of the transcript before I could figure out–mostly from the contexts plus some resemblance–what the right names or what the right reference should be. Besides that, the whole interview was full of broken sentences, interruptions, and so on, as unscripted interviews tend to be. Our secretary had a terrible time just getting the words down in some fashion, and she was completely unable to punctuate. That is not so unusual; perhaps that was a case where there were too many digressions, tangents, and backtracks.

I hope our tape will be a little easier to handle, but I have had that experience before. I'm not a great believer in relying on a tape as a record of a conference workshop or seminar. When the National Academy of Sciences's committee or panel meetings take place, they are sometimes taped, but I have always either taken notes myself or commissioned one or more people to take them.

Before I was head of the Bureau's International Statistics Program Center, I made a number of trips to Europe. One consequence of those trips was that I selected a group of about 30 different official statisticians from the European countries and the Census Bureau arranged for them to come to the United States. The classroom

was the main Census Bureau conference room. For a period of several months, I think, we were running an extensive training course every day, all day long, in household sample surveys and labor-force statistics in English. Spanish would not have been particularly appropriate because these were all Europeans, not Latin Americans. One of the requirements was that the people had a good working command of English. I found as I was travelling around Europe that most of the people I was dealing with did. This course resulted in the publication of a volume called *Papers on Labor Force Statistics in the United States*. We had a long sequence of "guest stars," people like Joe Daly, Bob Pearl, etc., and people from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and elsewhere. All were guest lecturers, and we taped all of the presentations. I had all of those presentations transcribed and then gave them back to the speakers, all of whom fell into a state of shock when they saw the transcript. I remember Bob Pearl saying to me: "This must be some kind of joke you are playing on me! I did not talk like that for 3 or 4 hours, did I?" I said: "Yes, you did, but that is the way people talk. Do not worry about it; a talk is not the same as a formal written document." But we had to do a lot of editing; so, I am not surprised in more recent times that I see the same sort of thing.

To go back into our earlier discussion, I might have mentioned that Dick Scammon–more that any other Director or almost anybody that I can think of–could talk in a way that the transcript did not need any editing. When he was called upon to testify before a congressional committee, he would say to me: "Give me some notes on this; write me something on it but not more than a page long," even though he was going to talk for a half hour or more. So, I crammed as much as I could on a page, and he would look at it in the car on our way to the hearing. Then, he would appear there, and he would talk as though he were reciting an essay on the subject. When the transcript would come to me for editing before it was published as part of the hearing, I had practically nothing to do on it. It was not only good diction and good form, but it was persuasive.

Bohme: **What I would like to discuss is the interrelationship Margaret Martin had with the Office of Management and Budget and the Census Bureau.**

Goldfield: Margaret Martin spent a major portion of her working career in what was originally a part of the Bureau of the Budget that later became the Office of Management and Budget. The Bureau of the Budget was originally in the Department of the Treasury. Then, it became part of the Executive Office of the President and later the Office of

Management and Budget. However, throughout nearly all of this time from the late 30's to the present, it has included a statistical standards office. It is responsible for coordinating the very decentralized U.S. statistical system and for establishing and trying to enforce standards. This all goes back to the Central Statistical Board established in 1933. In 1939, it became a permanent statistical coordinating agency in the Bureau of the Budget. It also underwent various changes of names and followed the Bureau of the Budget in its transformation to the Office of Management and Budget.

During the years 1943 to 1973, when Margaret Martin was on the staff of the statistical coordinating agency, she had a close relationship with the Bureau of the Census because the subject areas she was responsible for–i.e., monitoring and coordinating–were subjects the Census Bureau had programs in. She handled labor-force statistics throughout her 30 years' stay. For much of it, she also handled population censuses and surveys, and, for a time, income statistics as well. So, she had close working contacts with the Census Bureau's staff members involved with the Current Population Survey and with the decennial census. She also, of course, dealt with the Bureau of Labor Statistics and other agencies.

When I was working on Capital Hill, one of the things I did was write a report on the coordination of Federal statistics, featuring what was important to the Congress–minimizing the burden on business. The Federal Reports Act, which for many years was the main statutory authority for that office (I will call it the Office of Statistical Policy just as a generic name), was primarily directed at establishing a mechanism for reducing reporting burden. It was created out of the tremendous paperwork burden during World War II. During World War II, the office had grown to handle the tremendous amount of statistical, administrative, regulatory, and enforcement inquiries that were going on.

You might think we ran the war on paper; to some extent, we did. It sometimes seems that when the administration, Congress, and committees look at statistical gathering, they think they are looking at paperwork burden, so they tend to look negatively. Once you talk about paperwork burden–and we who are creating and operating surveys and censuses are in the same "house" with those who are collecting taxes, enforcing regulations, accepting applications for things, that kind of paper work–the administrative, regulatory, and enforcement paperwork is far greater in total that the statistical. But we get "tarred with the same brush"; so, it has been a problem for the Statistical Policy Office to try to look at things in the

right way, not just "How can we eliminate all pieces of paper?" or "How can we cut this down from five pages to one?"

So, if you just think of something like income tax returns, you can see where the real burden is. Burdens should be measured not only in terms of time and number of sheets of paper or the number of questions, but also whether it is painful or not.

Bohme: **Would you comment on the Census Bureau's interrelationship with the Office of Management and Budget, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Department of Commerce, and Congress, insofar as you observed them?**

Goldfield: Well, I was talking a little bit about what I call for convenience the "Statistical Policy Office" [in the Office of Management], which has been in existence for over 50 years now. The "Statistical Office" remained in the Office of Management and Budget except for a short time in the 1970's when it was the Office of Federal Statistical Policy and Standards in the Department of Commerce. One main reason for needing such an office is that the United States has the most decentralized statistical system of any country in the world. Some countries have almost completely centralized statistical systems. The United Kingdom has a central statistical office. I can recall having a discussion with Sir Claus Moser when he was the head statistician there. He said that the United Kingdom was so much better off because it has a completely centralized system. He is very British, despite the Germanic-sounding name, and he took understandable pride in the United Kingdom's statistical organization. I said: "No country has a completely centralized statistical system, not even the United Kingdom. Yours is more centralized than ours, which means that in some respects it is easier to run; it is, however, not completely centralized." He said: "What do you mean?" I said: "Well, there are military statistics, there are tax-collection statistics, there are road building statistics, and there are statistics that come out of the actual operations of every agency. The forestry service, or the equivalent in your country, can tell you how many trees there are in the national parks and so on. You are not responsible for all the statistics."

Well, he never thought of those as part of the system of national statistics; but, it is certainly true in this country too. Agencies that we do not even consider to be statistical have vast arrays of data and produce (to some degree) statistics that have uses. They may have only administrative uses: The Social Security Administration wants to know how many beneficiaries there are, but it does not go to the Census Bureau and say: "Run a survey for us that counts the number of beneficia-

ries that are in our computers." The Internal Revenue Service does not go to the Census Bureau to find out how many tax returns it received last year; it counts them up. So there are all kinds of statistics that are essential to running the Government that we tend not to think of as part of the Federal statistical system. But, in the United States, even those things which I think of as statistical operations per se, and which in other countries are all in one central office, are scattered among many bureaus, divisions, and branches.

In the Federal Government, there has always been talk about how this is not good: It is inefficient, duplicative, increases the reporting burden on people, and causes inconsistencies. You might get a different reading on some particular matter from one agency than you get from another or another part of the same department, but there are some advantages too. Sometimes competition is a good thing; at times, getting two opinions is a good thing, putting a statistical operation in a bureau within a department that is expert in that field can be a good thing. A bureau within the Department of Health and Human Services will be operating in an atmosphere of knowledge about health and human services. That staff would be more remote from the subject if they were in the Bureau of the Census or some free-standing central statistical agency. So, there are arguments pro and con.

On balance, I think most people would wish that the Federal statistical system was somewhat centralized. Efforts to accomplish that have never succeeded because of parochial interests and other factors. During the Nixon administration, whole volumes were released showing Nixon's concept of Government reorganization. This was one of the monuments he wished to leave behind him of rational reorganization of the whole Federal Government. It included something like a central statistical agency. That never came to pass, and I doubt that it ever will. It is not something that I considered to be critical. We have some bureaus doing good statistical work now, and "if it ain't broke, do not fix it."

But as decentralized as the Federal system is, there is a crying need for some central place that will see to it that when one agency says "standard deviation" it means the same thing as what another agency says is standard deviation. When one agency says "poverty," there is the hope that another agency means the same thing. That is not so readily accomplished, but there are all kinds of things for which there should be standards, and some central organization is needed to issue the standards.

When one agency says: “This is the Washington metropolitan area,” it should mean the same geographical entity for another agency. That is especially one of the things that the Statistical Policy Office does after each decennial census. It revises and issues a new set of definitions for standard metropolitan areas and it says to all its statistical agencies: “If you’re going to put out statistics for a metropolitan area, this is it.” It puts out other standards too. The Committee on National Statistics is trying to help it arrive at a standard classification of race and ethnic groups. We may never succeed in doing that. Another thing we are trying to do, that is even more difficult, is a standard definition of disability. We find that there are something like a hundred different definitions of disability that are written into various titles of Federal statutes and regulations, and hundreds more are out among States and cities. Absent complete centralization (if there is such a thing), then there should be some central core where things like that are given attention.

Also, the central Statistical Policy Office is concerned with statistical policy, not just standards. For example, what is a good way to run a survey? What is not a good way? What demands can the manager make upon respondents? What are the demands not to make? Also, it should be concerned with, if not adjudication, at least mediating disputes between statistical agencies. This sometimes happens. For a long time, there was a running dispute between the Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics as to who should run the Current Population Survey. The Statistical Policy Office finally settled this in a Solomon-like way, giving something to each of the two agencies. So there is a need for such an office.

At one time, the office was adequately staffed to do its job, but it has been scaled down to the point where it cannot do all the things it should do. Maybe nobody except the Director of the Office of Management and Budget would say that it is adequately staffed to do its task. It has had to farm out a lot things to the operating statistical agencies. It does not have enough staff really to regularly revise the Standard Industrial Classification [codes] and issue a new volume. [Revising] the Standard Industrial Classification is a big, tedious job, and with a staff of a half dozen people, each of whom now has to be responsible for a number of different subject areas, it just cannot do nearly as much as it did before. This is not to decry the competence, capability, and industry of the people who are there, including, for example, Maria Gonzalez, who used to be here at the Census Bureau. There just are not enough of them, and also there is a question of whether it has the “clout” it should have, having been in recent years pretty much divorced from the

budget process and from the ultimate decisions about what goes and what does not go in the way of programs.

It once used to be possible for the head of the Statistical Policy Office to say: “I do not like the way you are running this survey, and I am going to transfer responsibility for it to another agency,” or “I am going to tell our budget analysts next year not to appropriate any money for it.” That office is not really in that good a position to do that anymore. First of all, it hardly has enough people to do the staff work to formulate as strong an opinion as that about anything. Secondly, it does not have the direct, hands-on connection with the budgetary process and such things as it used to.

Representatives of the Committee on National Statistics, as well as many other people, have testified over the recent years about this office’s deplorable situation. We all think it should exist; it is the “cop on the beat,” but we like having the cop on the beat–at least people in positions like mine [do]. It may be that in some statistical agency now, that somebody would say: “I would just as soon have them go out of existence because they just bother me. They are reluctant to approve my questionnaire forms and they have been a damned nuisance; I would, therefore, just as soon wipe them out.” But generally speaking, I think heads of statistical agencies would say: “Although we have to argue with them, we have to beseech them to improve things for us. We need to have some central authority to turn to.”

We agree that there needs to be such an entity, given the size of the Federal Government and what it is doing, including its statistical activities. As the office’s present staff is inadequate, the Census Bureau and other major statistical agencies now find themselves doing things that used to be done within the Statistical Policy Office. If there are cross-cutting things that need to properly be done, they should be done centrally and not partially. It is not too good to have to farm them out to other agencies. I do not see that they can go so far as to tell the Census Bureau to take responsibility for reviewing and putting a stamp of approval on the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ questionnaires. Suppose they did that or saw a lack of staff ability to do it themselves; that would be an awkward situation. That is about as much as I think I would want to say about the Office of Management and Budget. The Office of Statistical Policy has important functions to perform; it is not what it used to be, and it does not have the capability–simply for lack of resources–to do what it used to do, or to do it well. This is too bad; you would think the Federal Government could afford to put more people there. It has undergone a

whole succession of down-sizings, including the time it spent (about 3 years) living in the Department of Commerce.

Bohme: **Joe Duncan was running it then, was he not?**

Goldfield: Just to digress again: When that position was opened up, before it was moved to the Department of Commerce, I was asked to take over the directorship of the Statistical Policy Office. I already saw it in a state of decline and could see further decline. I had what I considered a bigger and better job at the Census Bureau, so I declined. In that process, I recommended to the Assistant Director of the Office of Management and Budget that its personnel director (a young man by the name of Joe Duncan that I had some contact with and I thought would be interested) might be interested in taking the position. I said he had a lot of energy and enthusiasm; so, Joe got the job, and I cannot say that I did him a great favor; however, Joe survived it and, of course, eventually he left it.

Anyway, the way it got tossed into the Department of Commerce, which is just another example of how in recent years the office has been mistreated, is that when Carter became President, one of his announced plans was to streamline the Federal Government. Almost every President says he is going to do that. Some of them really try to do that. Carter really tried to do it; he had a commission established to provide a plan. President Carter said that the Executive Office of the President had become bloated. There were too many people there, trying to do too many things that should not to be done within the Office of the President. He promised: “When I become President, I am going to get rid of a lot of those people and functions and send them back to the agencies where they belong.” So, President Carter had a special task force on the Federal statistical system, and he also had this overall commission on reducing the Executive Office of the President. The overall commission looked at everything that was in the Executive Office of the President, and he asked: “Does this have to be in the Executive Office of President? If not, where can we put it? Or could we abolish it?” Well, they came to this Statistical Policy Office, and they said: “Well, we are under orders from the President to toss out the window everything we possibly can; why not this? Why does that have to be in the Executive Office of the President? So, why don’t we put it in that department which does more statistical work than any other department?”

So, the Statistical Policy Office was put in the Department of Commerce. That was not the right place for it because you have the problem of how could it oper-

ate in an impartial way with the respect to differences between statistical agencies if it is a sister of some of those statistical agencies? It would be like having your brother act as judge in a legal dispute between you and some nonrelated person. That was just an example of that office's deterioration over the last several decades.

Bohme: **You mentioned the decision concerning dividing up the function of the Current Population Survey. We have had ample documentation of the discussion the Census Bureau had with the Office of Management and Budget just before the 1990 Census of Population and Housing having to do with the sample size and number of questions on the questionnaire. Can you think back to an earlier period in which you were either an observer or a participant where the Office of Management and Budget did something of significant benefit to or for the Census Bureau–perhaps in suggesting legislation or things of that sort?**

Goldfield: During the heyday of that office, and continuing even into the present to some extent, it was never proper to regard it as an enemy or even as an obstacle. On the whole, the office has been dedicated to working for the betterment of Federal statistics. Therefore, its objective is not that different from that of the Bureau of the Census. It certainly has supported legislation. For example, it did tend to support the legislation that resulted after the St. Regis case that we spoke of earlier in this interview, and it has generally approved virtually all of the many Census Bureau's survey and census questionnaires sent to it over the years. At one time, one of my functions was to be the internal Census Bureau reports clearance officer. Bureau employees had to go through me before the reports could be sent to the Office of Management and Budget. But at both levels they were getting careful consideration–not merely my saying or anybody at the Statistical Policy Office saying: "Oh, I see there is another census questionnaire on my desk; where is my rubber stamp?" Generally speaking, the Statistical Policy Office's objective was to provide good professional review to survey plans and so on, and work with the Census Bureau to resolve whatever it thought ought to be changed. It was not a situation where the only outcomes could be outright acceptance or outright rejection; rather, there were negotiations to reach agreement.

Margaret Martin said they did that all the time. For many years, she (and before her, her predecessor, Gladys Palmer) chaired an interagency committee on labor-force statistics that was very helpful to the Census Bureau. The Statistical Policy

Office was able to do things like that when it had more staffing. Gladys Palmer was a world-renowned expert on that subject. Margaret Martin started sort of as Gladys Palmer's "handmaiden." I have this somewhat apocryphal vision of Gladys Palmer sitting at the head of the table (I used to attend those meetings as a Census Bureau representative) and Margaret Martin sitting on the floor at her knee. That is not really true, but that is the vision I have. Later, Margaret took over and also became a world-renowned expert on labor-force statistics and an expert on various other subjects.

The office was very helpful to the agencies in serving as a forum, because any data that are released by any statistical agency are used by other agency. That is certainly true for the Census Bureau. It is not a user of any of its own statistics, except in the sense that it looks at them to find out how to make them better; but, it is not a user in the sense that it is a policy-determining or program-operating agency. So, these various forums that the Statistical Policy Office set up and chaired were very helpful to the Census Bureau and to other agencies. There were times when we were trying to get something accepted, and the Bureau felt maybe the Statistical Policy Office was being picky. That is a normal course of events, but I would always looked upon this, on the whole, as a helpful procedure.

We did have gripes. Sometimes the Statistical Policy Office would hold up a survey beyond the date on which the Census Bureau expected to get it into the field. Sometimes they would make us cut out questions that the Bureau thought should be in there. This still goes on to this day. The people now involved in this, with myself as an onlooker, are more likely to gripe about it now than Census did in the days when there was a bigger and more experienced staff there. In all the years that Margaret dealt with the Census Bureau not only on labor force but on the broader area of population statistics, I doubt that she ever got anybody here really mad at her.

Bohme: **Down through the years, I think we have seen variations in the attention that the top officials at the Department of Commerce have paid to the Census Bureau. Would you care to comment on those, based on your experience and observations?**

Goldfield: Yes, I will comment by saying that your comment is right. I have no measure of this, but I think from earlier participation and from recent observation that the department has become more and more involved in micromanagement. We are now using that term in a pejorative way. Before there was an Under Secretary for Eco-

nomic Affairs and something that was called the Economics and Statistics Administration in the Department of Commerce–in earlier days that kind of structure just did not exist–the Census Bureau was more autonomous and so was the Bureau of Economic Analysis (or the Office of Business Economics, as it was earlier called). This was so simply because there was not this whole departmental staff group that had an interest in it. There was somebody to report to, but that was more a matter of formality than anything else.

There has always been a question that some of us have batted about as to whether the Census Bureau would be better off if it were an independent agency as opposed to being within the Department of Commerce or within any other department. Again, there are pros and cons on that. If an agency is in a department, then the agency has somebody representing it sitting at the cabinet table in the White House. You are part of a major appropriation bill; you have got somebody who can give you political backing when you need it. If you are not in a department, then you are not subject to the threat of political interference as much; the agency is not as over-layered, which is sometimes frustrating. On the other hand, however, the agency is more naked. So, there are unresolvable pros and cons.

As I had earlier mentioned, President Nixon had a plan to reorganize the whole Federal Government. Part of that plan was the creation of a department of industry and trade modeled after the Japanese ministry. It would be made up of some, but not all, of the elements of the Department of Commerce plus some other governmental units. Some parts of the Department of Commerce considered not closely involved with the promotion of industry and trade would be moved elsewhere. Several locations were mentioned for the Census Bureau. At one point, the word was that the reorganization team had settled on the Department of the Treasury as the new home for the Census Bureau. The Committee on National Statistics, along with others, got very concerned about that. We felt that putting the Census Bureau in the same department as the tax collectors, the immigration officers, and other enforcement groups would have an adverse effect on the willingness of people to respond to the Census Bureau's censuses and surveys.

To express our concern at the top level, I led a small delegation to the White House office of Ed Meese, Counsellor to the President. Bruce Chapman [Census Bureau Director, 1981-1983] helped us arrange that meeting; he was then one of the advisors to the President. I found that when we started talking with Meese that he had already been convinced that was a good thing to do. I said to him: "The

Treasury Department is well established, directed, and operated; it has good staffing, and it knows what it is doing. However, the Department of the Treasury is the wrong place to put the Census Bureau." He asked why. I said: "Because the Bureau is then in the same department that oversees tax collection. This is going to adversely affect the willingness of people to report income and other data to the Census Bureau." He said: "That is no problem; we will just send out a notice saying that the census law still applies and nobody else can see anything you give to the Census Bureau."

I said to Ed Meese: "How do you expect to get that message to every person in the United States? How do you expect them to believe it? I have been involved in making studies in which I find that people do not believe such promises. Half of them do not get the message in the first place, and those that do do not believe it." Well, we spent an hour or so talking with Meese. I did most of the talking, and the end result seemed to be that the idea was dropped–not so much as a favor to the Census Bureau, but because the whole master plan never really got executed. But it was a problem–the sort of a problem that a strong Statistical Policy Office in the Office of Management and Budget would have quashed right away. But that is not the way it happened.

Bohme: **What about the proposals that the Bureau be an independent agency? We have already seen that there are pros and cons. However, it seems to me that there were one or two specific proposals. How did they get quashed?**

Goldfield: Remember, I mentioned that President Carter had set up a commission on streamlining the Federal Government and that there was also a particular commission on the Federal statistical system, which was chaired by Professor James Bonnen. Tom Jabine and others worked there with him. It carefully looked into this matter. As the Director of the Committee on National Statistics, I worked informally with Bonnen. He would keep sending me drafts of things to review, and he said to me, "I am looking for a "house" to put the Census Bureau in." He had in mind taking it out of the Commerce Department but not leaving it completely alone. Well, he never really found a good house to put it in. At one time he was thinking of putting it in the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. I thought that was kind of a odd place to put it, but he said, "Well, it is sort of self-standing, and it is highly reputable. Maybe it would provide a house." He never really settled the issue.

The problem is that you see the advantages of being autonomous, and you see the advantages of being protected; however, if you try to combine them, then you do not know where that leaves you. In countries that have a central statistical office, sometimes that office is a self-standing institution reporting, perhaps, to the prime minister. Sometimes it is within whatever they think is the appropriate ministry or department. This is sometimes one that has to do with finances or sometimes one that has to do with social services or whatever; but, they locate it somewhere. My own feeling is that, given the proper internal circumstances, it is probably better to be part of a major department. You are more protected. You have more authority above you than you would have otherwise. Although it is nice to think that an independent agency would be recognized as having more integrity, I do not really know why that necessarily follows. An independent agency is not independent anyway; it still depends on those in Congress who appropriate money and on the Office of Management and Budget to approve the agency's budget. So, how independent can you get? The National Academy of Sciences is more independent than that; it cannot, however, be completely independent either unless somebody were to endow it with millions of dollars and say: "You now have enough money to do everything you want just with the interest on your endowment, and you do not have to ask anybody to pay for anything anymore."

I guess at one time, when the Ford Motor Company stocks were in better shape, the Ford Foundation could say it was pretty independent; but, until one reaches that stage, I do not see that this concept of being put out in an "open field" is necessarily a strengthening move.

I know that some of the people in the Census Bureau–and I certainly will not mention any of them by name–have been growing increasingly restive in recent years. Certainly, some of us who observe the Bureau have seen what seems to be an increasing degree of micromanagement. It is almost embarrassing to the Census Bureau that when congressional committees or subcommittees hold a hearing on the decennial census–and Lord knows there have been plenty of them–that the spokesman is the Under Secretary of Commerce or the Deputy Under Secretary, with maybe the Director of the Census Bureau sitting off to one side. It used to be that the Director would be the chief witness. It happens that people like Mike Darby [Michael Darby, Under Secretary] and Mark Plant [Deputy Under Secretary] are competent and knowledgeable people. They have learned to speak with a considerable degree of technical assurance about issues concerning the 10-year

census and other matters relating to the Census Bureau. It is not the sort of thing, however, that makes the Census Bureau think that it is the master of its own destiny as it once used to be to a greater degree.

As I say, one of the reasons I think this is happening is simply that the "structure built up," and the structure thinks it should be doing things; so it does. When the whole structure was simpler and involved fewer people, the Director of the Census Bureau reported to the Chief Economist of the Department of Commerce–at one time, that position was held by Courtenay Slater. There was not anything the least bit humiliating about that kind of arrangement, but it is bad for two reasons, I think. One is it provides a certain amount of misdirection to the Census Bureau. You would think, in the long run, that the competent statisticians of the Census Bureau would be more likely to make the right technical decisions than the economist who happens to be the Deputy Under Secretary of Commerce at the time.

I am not saying anything derogatory about any of those individuals. It also has the disadvantage that it may tend to create in the minds of chairs of congressional subcommittees and maybe in the minds of the public that there could be some political influence involved. It could be imagined that somebody might be saying to the Census Bureau: "We do not want you to adjust the census for undercount because we think that would be hurtful to the Republicans." Worse yet, there might be a conjecture in the minds of some people that somewhere in the Commerce Department somebody is saying to the Census Bureau: "We do not like the figures you are about to publish that say poverty is increasing in the Unites States. Fix them up." Now, that does not happen, but the possible perception outside that it could happen could be very damaging.

So, it would be nice, I think, in the best of all possible worlds (by a realistic use of the word "possible") if the Census Bureau could be located, for example, in the Department of Commerce but quite rigorously screened off from any possible misinterpretable influences within the department. There would have to be the proper balance between autonomy and the virtue of having a higher authority to represent you. I cannot imagine that anybody is going to say, and I would not say it myself, to the Secretary of Commerce: "From now on the Census Bureau wants you to be just a figurehead. When anything involves the Census Bureau, you do anything they tell you to do, and that is the popular, right way to do it."

Bohme: **I do not want to belabor this, but I was struck by your description of the National Academy of Sciences as being basically an independent service organization. It seems to me that we might have a parallel here. The Census Bureau is also an independent service organization because it is gathering statistics which are used by many.**

Goldfield: You would not want to go so far as to make the Census Bureau not a part of the Federal Government, like the National Academy of Sciences. If that happened, the Census Bureau would not have the statutory authority to compel people to respond to the censuses and surveys. The Bureau should be a part of the Federal Government. The question is: How remote do you want to make it from other parts of the Federal Government? Is remoteness good–yes or no? I cannot really give you a complete, definite, extreme yes or no answer on issues like that, because that is not the true state of affairs.

I would attach to this discussion something I said earlier about the difference in the nature of the appointment of the head of the Bureau of Economic Analysis versus the Census Bureau. One thing that could help bring more independence for the Census Bureau is to make the appointment procedure for the Director of the Census Bureau like that for the Commissioner of Labor Statistics. That is, the person appointed to head the Census Bureau would be commissioned to a 4-year term to start at the middle of a presidential term and go to the middle of the next presidential term, and that the Census Bureau's Director could be removed only for cause during that term. Then, somehow, build up the tradition that has been built up with the Bureau of Labor Statistics that a nonpolitical, technically qualified person should always be chosen when a vacancy occurs.

Bohme: **I do not want to explore the relationship between Janet Norwood [the Bureau of Labor Statistics Commissioner] and the Secretary of Labor, because we might get into some parallel discussion there.**

Goldfield: Let me just say this. Janet Norwood is a highly competent head of a statistical agency, technically like Ross Eckler. She worked her way up to the top position within the Bureau of Labor Statistics. She was technically highly qualified, and she has other attributes and talents. Like Eckler, She is highly effective in the job. Quite often important, the Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics must have the ability to win over the support of the next person to fill the job of Secretary of Labor and Assistant Secretary of Labor and to get that person to understand (1) the relatively autonomous position of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, (2) how important it is to maintain that, and (3) how important it is for those officials to support her

and the Bureau. She has always been very successful at that. She does not want anybody to come into a position of higher authority in the Department of Labor thinking that Bureau of Labor Statistics is some kind of vassal of the policy people in the Labor Department.

The Director of the Census Bureau is not quite in the same advantageous position as that. No Director has ever come into the Census Bureau expecting to be a boot-licker, and no Director has ever acted that way. There is not, however, quite the same degree of recognized independence. If anything, the Census Bureau should be construed as being more remote from the Department of Commerce than the Bureau of Labor Statistics is from the Department of Labor because the basic reason for the Bureau of Labor Statistics is to provide labor statistics for the Department of Labor to use in determining labor policy. The Census Bureau is not quite in the same relationship to the Commerce Department. The Census Bureau does provide some statistics, foreign trade is the leading example, that the Commerce Department uses. However, a lot of the data the Census Bureau collects are not so much for the Department of Commerce as for other departments or for the country at large. So, it is not as close a fit for the Census Bureau and the Department of Commerce as it is for the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Department of Labor. On the other hand, however, there is no other department you can find where there would be a better fit.

Bohme: **Thank you Ed. I think we have discussed just about everything we wanted to talk about. I want to thank you very much.**